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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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Flashing Armor

THE embattled clergy, meeting recently in New York, called for new heroes in fiction, with biting swords and flashing armor. They decried the milksops of realism.

Much can be said for their contention. A little more pluck and a little less introspection, a little more morale and a little less animalism, in the characters that novelists are writing about would please a good many readers. But which comes first, the chicken or the egg? What creates a character or an ideal in literature, the writer or the environment he lives in? Do there have to be Galahads and d'Artagnans and Colonel Newcomes before you can effectively write about them?

The question is infinitely complex. Sometimes the author, clearly, is making articulate a host of realities that are in active existence around him, combining and idealizing but not inventing. Such was the apparent truth with Shakespeare, Fielding, and Dickens. Sometimes the creative writer presents to a susceptible world what seems to be a new conception of human nature, which powerfully influences the thoughts, the emotions, the action of a new generation. Such was the powerful effect of Goethe's Werther and Byron's Childe Harold and the aristocratic misanthropes of his verse romances.

But note the "seems." It is extraordinarily difficult to separate the social determinants of literature from literature itself, and say which came first, the social situation or the imaginative conception of the artist. Every good book has roots in the soil; every good book fertilizes the soil from which it springs. Sometimes, one might say, the function of prose or poetry masterpieces is fruit, and sometimes seed. No writing, except the most lyric of lyric poetry, can be interpreted without a knowledge of its background, and no writing, except social documents like "Main Street" or "Uncle Tom's Cabin," can be interpreted by its background alone. The esthetic explanation of literature explains too little, and the economic explanation of literature explains too much that is irrelevant. To say that the intense personalities of Dickens are due to the sudden self-consciousness of the British bourgeoisie, is true enough to be interesting but not true enough to settle Dickens's business once and for all. To say that the songs of Shakespeare could have been written in any age is true enough in the absolute—yet (in the concrete) no one now can write them.

Hence, to return to our clergy, the desire for a new virility is laudable, but will remain only a desire unless we can meet the specifications of a literary contract. And these are—that there must be a vital interest abroad in virility, or a genius somewhere who can shape a new "eidolon," as Whitman would call it, of virility, that will catch the imagination of the nation.

And indeed it seems that there is a pendulum swing in literary history, from times when masterful writers try to lead to times when conscientious writers try to record not the ought, but the what, of the community's doings. And it may be further observed that when the champions of "ought" are successful it is usually because, as with Emerson or Bunyan or Spenser, there is a deep tradition flowing inarticulately which they tap and bring to the surface and raise into airy fountains that are valid as well as beautiful because

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MACHIAVELLI AND A PRINCE OF THE RENAISSANCE.

Niccoló Machiavelli

By LLEWELYN POWYS

IT is impossible for men to conduct themselves as well-descended spirits. The essential frivolity of their minds, the shallow inconstancy of their emotions, reveals on every occasion their base simian lineage. They are a breed debarred by heredity from civilized recognition. With their animal ears well-plugged with Lucian's celebrated wax, the substance of which is ignorance and deceit; with their hearts full of "hidden malignity," they encompass the earth, generation after generation, the great in their pride and the mob in their stench, without hope of improvement. Such were the damnable opinions of Machiavelli that for a period of four centuries have raised so noisy a clamor of dissension and protest.

What manner of man then was this Florentine Secretary, this "mokker of all religion and vertew"? Intellectual emancipation was as natural to him as was the air he breathed. The religious and ethical preconceptions that besot ordinary heads left his clear. It might be said that the grave import of the two words good and evil was never understood by him. As far as he was concerned Eve might never have undertaken her adventure.

From a study of his works and private correspondence it is possible to form an idea of the main outlines of his philosophy. It was his fundamental opinion that our life owes no single sequence to any man-interested deity. He sees all earth-life carried forward by an irresistible destiny, which, like an insurgent flood, sweeps on and on to the unplumbed ocean of death. But, as with the thought of Epicurus expressed in his swerve of the atoms, this Florentine Prometheus leaves a crack open for the operation of man's free will. He believed that each of us has a modicum of freedom, an independent freehold, within the boundaries of which, confined though they inevitably must be, foresight and intelligent direction are still profitable; dykes may be strengthened and banks thrown up against the onrushing tidal wave. There can be in his opinion no greater folly than for man to try to stem the flood, to contest directly against the movement of Fate. "I repeat once more, what from all history is seen to be most true, that men may aid Fortune, and not withstand her; they may weave her webs but not break them."

His considered judgment of religion, that hoary obsession of the nations, was completely cynical. He regarded it merely as a providential instrument of Government. "This good citizen," as Rousseau called him, "understood centuries before Karl Marx its pragmatic use as a drug for the masses." To the profounder mystical claims of religion, so pathetic, so tragic even, he remained from first to last blind, deaf, and dumb. In "The Prince," the most perfect work of art that he wrote, precise and deadly as a dagger, he says:

> To which end they (the Government) should countenance and further whatsoever tells in favor of religion, even should they think it untrue; and the wiser they are and the better they are acquainted with natural causes, the more ought they to do so.

To be "acquainted with natural causes"—that is the open secret that should be the natural possession of all free, practical spirits of *virtu*. Life as he had seen it in Renaissance Italy had destroyed his confidence in the efficacy of prayer. He regarded prayer as an entirely meaningless and futile practice inadvertently profitable to Governments, and that was all.

> Prayers are indeed necessary; and he is downright mad who forbids the people their ceremonies and devotions. For from them it seems that men reap union and good order, and upon these depend prosperity and happiness. Yet let no man be so silly as to believe that, if his house falls upon his head, God will save it without any other prop, for he will die beneath the ruins.

All his famous "policies" have their roots in his indurated conviction as to the irremediable depravity of mankind—"ungrateful, inconstant, hypocritical, fearful of danger, and covetous of gain." This conviction is an accepted axiom with him, a self-evident truth, and upon it he elaborates his subtle science. Anticipating our modern psychologists, he recognized that morality was nothing but conduct-pressure from the herd.

> The sanction of conduct was derived from positive institutions; where no law existed, no action could be unjust . . . In the beginning of the world, as the inhabitants were few, they lived for a time dispersed after the manner of wild beasts, afterwards, when they increased and multiplied, they united together

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A Man of Fashion

MEMOIRS OF THE COMTE ALEXANDRE DE TILLY. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1932. $4.

Reviewed by MEADE MINNEGERODE

ASIDE from having served as a boy among the pages of the Queen of France, Marie Antoinette, and having, at a much later date, and after other innumerable and ubiquitous seductions, become, temporarily, the husband of Miss Maria Matilda Bingham, of Philadelphia—he ceased to be her husband almost immediately, upon receipt of five thousand pounds sterling and other valuable considerations from that young lady's father—it is not manifest at any point in his career, if one except the suicide which closed it, that the Comte Alexandre de Tilly ever did anything of the slightest importance or of the least noteworthiness.

He was, evidently, one of a swarm of such youths as were to be found in and around Versailles during the reign of Louis XVI; sprung from good, or good enough, provincial families—with just a shade of doubt, sometimes, as to the validity of some of their ancestral claims, just a slight difficulty, occasionally, in filling in the gaps in otherwise impeccable genealogies—peacocking about at Court; running up debts against their patrimonies, duelling and swaggering around the town; joining the army and resigning from it; cultivating the Muses to the extent of a poem or two, a comedy perhaps, or a little volume of essays; and, above all, sleeping as nearly as possible in every bed in France, England, Germany, and the Low Countries—for they traveled much, these young men—with every lady of pleasing demeanor and hospitable instinct, married or virgin, virtuous or mercenary, who came to their ever alert and robust attention.

One of that multitude who, overtaken by the French Revolution, swarmed over the rest of Europe—and as far as Philadelphia and New York—eking out existences, intent continuously on tremendous enterprises the unimportance and footlessness of which must at times have discouraged even their fatuous natures. Living from hand to mouth in dirty linen—but Tilly was to live for a while on Miss Bingham's father—keeping up the past

This Week

INDECISIVE DAY.
By HARRY KEMP.

"FAREWELL TO REFORM."
Reviewed by WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE.

"AMID THESE STORMS."
Reviewed by STANLEY WENT.

"A CULTURAL HISTORY OF THE MODERN AGE."
Reviewed by WILLIAM HARLAN HALE.

"EXPERIENCE AND ART."
Reviewed by LOUIS GRUDIN.

"THE COLORED DOME."
Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT.

THE BOWLING GREEN.
By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

"OUR OBSOLETE CONSTITUTION."
Reviewed by FABIAN FRANKLIN.

Next Week, or Later

"CAN AMERICA STAY AT HOME?"
Reviewed by JAMES T. SHOTWELL.

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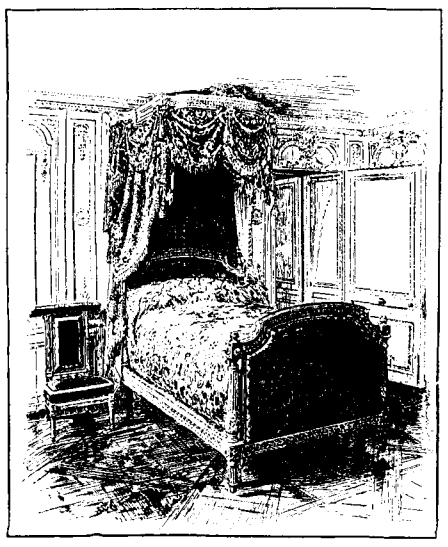

A COURT BEDROOM IN THE TIME OF MARIE-ANTOINETTE.
Reproduced from "The Story of Marie-Antoinette," by Anna L. Bicknell (Century).

as they liked to have one believe that they had known it, in the face of an almost non-existent present, unsupported by the hope of any particular future. Very touchy, always, about their honor, they who were so frequently to be found in the midst of scabrous undertakings. A host of completely unimportant persons, many of whom—those who dared their adventurer's luck in France itself—the Revolution swept up and flung to its head choppers.

But if the Comte Alexandre de Tilly was supremely unimportant—except in so far as he may for longer or shorter periods have influenced the lives of more women than even he himself chose to enumerate—his memoirs, perhaps for the very reason of his own unimportance, are themselves quite notably important .

Starting out as a royal page, then later as a young subaltern in the army, and eventually as a gay blade about town—admitted to more than the mere fringes of the Court, for he carried with him the interest accorded to him by the Queen as a result of his pagehood—Tilly came, inevitably, in direct contact, or found himself in less personal though equally well informed association, with many personages of importance and with a host of lesser personalities forming the background, and in some instances the very brilliant forefront, of the Paris and Versailles scene during the decades preceding and culminating in the French Revolution, the point beyond which the memoirs do not proceed.

Unhampered by any necessity for recording events of the slightest importance—since, aside from his own amorous achievements, none in which he was concerned survened in the course of his career at that period—Tilly was free to set down all his minute recollections of persons and obscure daily, not to say nightly, transactions, producing a picture of his times, the fatal twilights of the Ancien Régime, which memoirs more closely involved with the larger happenings of that day must, from the nature of their more crowded chapters, have failed to reveal in such profuse and unconscious detail. It may well remain a mystery why Tilly should have been moved to write his memoirs in the first place; but, having determined to do so, they were—quite unexpectedly to him who must have imagined himself as preserving the graceful and regretted annals of a great era which the Revolution had so tragically interrupted and annihilated—to remain a pitiless revelation, all the more so because so unintentionally, of all the folly, and recklessness, and extravagance of that society, not without elegance and a now lamentable vanished spirituality, then already crumbling to its quite unnecessary doom.

Copiously annotated and admirably translated—the first complete and scholarly English edition of these memoirs which have been compared with those of Saint-Simon and Casanova—adorned by an instructive introduction by Havelock Ellis, the book is not ordained so much to be read from front to back as to be approached and investigated from the rear through its index. For Tilly rambles. In and out of France, in and out of the palace apartments, in and out of salons and green rooms, in and out of ministerial offices, in and out of countless beds. He rambles, and he digresses—on the way from one bed to another, or while still in the same bed—until chronology is murdered and the locality of the bed under discussion confused; and he moralizes, most superfluously. But always in the end he has something to say worth hearing, and occasionally brilliantly expressed. Something scandalous or entertaining; some good anecdote about some well known person; some shrewd appraisal of a contemporary; some glimpse "of the Court life"—to quote from the introduction—"and especially the love life of a man of the world of that age."

Meade Minnigerode has written much on France. Among his books is "The Magnificent Comedy," a study of the French Revolution.

Niccolo Machiavelli

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and in order the better to defend themselves, they began to look to that man among them who was the strongest and bravest, and obeyed him. From this arose the knowledge of the honorable and good, as opposed to things pernicious and evil.

It was thus that men came to know good and evil, but they remained still in their natures essentially brutish. "For men will always prove bad, unless by necessity they are compelled to be good."

There are two methods by which such necessary discipline can be applied, law and force. Of these the first is "proper to man," the second proper to beasts. "It belongs therefore to a Prince to understand both, when to make use of the rational and when of the brutal way." Fear rules the world. Fear is a more constant force and more to be relied upon than love.

> Men have less scruple in offending one who is beloved than one who is feared; for love is preserved by the bond of obligation, which, owing to the baseness of men, is broken at every opportunity for their own advantage; but fear is preserved by the dread of punishment, which never fails.

When once any society has been so drilled into good behavior that the majority can live securely there will be no more talk of freedom. "Justice embodied in Laws is the soul of Freedom."

He sees all states caught in a revolving wheel of inevitable recurrence.

> *Virtu* produces peace, peace idleness, idleness disorder, disorder ruin . . . then when a district has been involved in disorder for a time, *virtu* returns to dwell there once again . . . for this is the circle revolving within which all states are and have been governed.

A certain hypocritical unction, a congenital inclination towards sanctimonious psychic prevarication is part of the very constitution of ordinary human beings. Machiavelli is entirely free of any such weakness. His mind is without cant. It strikes deep into life as a man with a single stroke might stab at a heart of flesh. Continually he shocks our complacence, and indeed we may take it for granted that the traditional gregarious prepossessions of our kind, their more tender superstitions, cannot have meant much to a man capable of alluding to Caesar Borgia's murder of Vitellozzo and Oliverotto as the most beautiful treachery, "il bellissimo inganno!" With his inhuman detachment he draws deductions from the affairs of men, just as a vivisectionist might from the behavior of his unlucky mice. He looks to deduce rules of conduct that are dependent upon "natural causes" and uninfluenced by human sentiment. His "Hatch-evil" writings are charged with dangerous non-moral dynamite. Perfidy, for example, deliberately used for a particular end never struck him as discreditable: "for though the act accuses him, the result excuses him." Again and again he emphasizes the fact that people are always taken in by the "appearance and events of things" and he calmly announces that "He who is dead cannot think about revenging himself."

We can hardly wonder that "The Prince," with its "pestilent Machiavellian policies," has been the treasured handbook of those who have aspired to tyrannical rule. It was the favorite night-cap reading of Louis XIV. Frederick the Great covered his tracks like any wise fox by writing a treatise against it. A carefully annotated copy of it was found in Napoleon's coach at Waterloo.

Machiavelli observed that men shrink from leaving the beaten highway of human conduct, they do not dare to be "gloriously wicked" or, as he puts it in his own reserved and sinister manner, "to have recourse to extremities." "The night that Pier Sodernini died his soul went down to the mouth of hell; but Pluto cried 'Foolish soul, no hell for thee. Go to the Limbo of the babes.' "

Cardinal Pole accused him of writing with the finger of Satan, but in reality his pages are penned with the cold starfish thumb of science. He tells us himself that he does not wish to give us a fancy picture, but to go to the "real truth of things." He considers the problems of statecraft as though human beings were *canaille* without hearts and as easy to gull as gudgeon. Throughout the generations idealists have always hated him, execrated him, called him "illiterate atheist." His unemotional conclusions have however appealed to men of a scientific temper of mind, to men of reason, like Bacon who wrote: "We are much beholden to Machiavelli . . . who wrote what men do and not what they ought to do."

We would have gravely misunderstood Machiavelli nevertheless if we believed that the chiefest interest of his years lay in the solutions of fine social conundrums. Though without doubt he recognized the pleasure to be derived from "power acquired and enjoyed on earth," yet the allegiance to life of this great realist was far too vigorous, far too passionate, far too imaginative, and far too profound, to allow him to find his highest satisfaction in such vanities. It was natural to his mind to be exercised with each succeeding political situation, but his secret personal preoccupation, his most serious personal preoccupations, was with his own love affairs. There is no doubt that these were the events that really mattered to him. Because La Barbera does not write to him from Rome he takes no less a person than Guicciardini into his confidence and even manages to persuade him to go and find out what the matter is, "for she gives me more anxiety than the Emperor himself." He dreads lest his reputation as a man of judgment may not be sufficient to win for him "a fleeting kiss" from La Riccia, or that age might deprive him of his privileged place by Donato's fireside. It has often been so with great men. It is the trivial spirits who have turned away from this deep well of human refreshment and happiness. In one of his letters Machiavelli declares that while his worldly activities have brought him nothing but anxiety and loss, from his love affairs he has derived in every case advantage and joy.

In his late middle life, after he had been put upon the rack and banished from Florence, it was still this same sweet folly that sustained his soul. A letter to his friend Francesco Vettori, a letter without cynicism, sensitive, innocent even, has to do with a girl he had met in the fields.

> Being exiled in the country I have met with a creature so gentle, so delicate, so noble, both in her nature and her attributes, that I can neither praise nor love her as she deserves . . . the threads have become strong, made fast with knots that cannot be untied.

In a still more celebrated letter he describes his daily life at San Casciano. In the morning he talks with the woodcutters "who are always full of some misfortune either of their own or their neighbors"; he then goes off to snare thrushes; and afterwards to the tavern to play at cards or dice with the butcher and miller and maltster, their voices sounding far across the fields with "endless wrangling and offensive words" over a disputed farthing.

> "The Brewer, the Maltster, the Miller and I
> Left a heifer, left a filly, left a Ding Dong;
> They weren't the same pretties, but what's that to we,
> Pass along boys! Pass along!"

And then in the evening he returns to his home, and taking off his soiled country dress he puts on court attire and enters his library to commune with the great minds of antiquity, a peer amongst his peers, at peace at last "and for the space of four hours I feel no weariness, and forget every trouble; I have no fear of poverty, and am not dismayed by death."

A discerning reader may derive from his writings certain invaluable hints as to the conduct of life. Machiavelli's hand is never far from the pulse beat of earth existence. His shrewd observations last well. "Honest slaves are always slaves and good men always paupers." He maintained that the secret of a fortunate life lies in a man's power to adapt himself to the circumstances that are beyond his control, that man being happy "whose manner of proceeding concerts with the times, and he unhappy who cannot accommodate to this." Above all things it is necessary to be detached in one's outlook, to preserve always an unvanquished philosophical citadel amid the jolting events of this naughty world. "It is convenient his mind be at his command and flexible to all the puffs and variations of fortune." Unintimidated, undistracted, a man must be ready at all times to return to the undisturbed lair of his own proud lonely soul. "For long I have never said what I believed nor believed what I said, and even if at times I speak the truth I hide it among so many lies that it is hard to find."

Machiavelli was a liberal humanist, a spirited advocate of the wisest and sanest of all human traditions. In matters of love, wherein is man's greatest profit under the sun, he forestalls the wisdom of William Blake.

> Those are tormented by Love who, when he settles in their breasts, would either bind him, or clip his wings . . . But those who, when he goes let him depart, and when he returns accept him readily, are always honored and caressed by him and triumph beneath his rule.

Upon our sad earth where because of false values too readily accepted, where because of thwartings and frustrations, "men come to carry written in their eyes the terror of their souls" few dare to speak out the simple truth. To enjoy the present benefit of time was Machiavelli's aim, and without reservations he exhorts us also to go and do likewise.

> He who is held wise by day will never be held foolish by night; for he who is esteemed a man of worth, and who deserves such a reputation, may do what he will to amuse himself and to live gladly . . . I can only give you this advice—to follow Love *totis habenis*, and that pleasure which you take today you will not have to take tomorrow. I beg of you to follow your star, and not to lose aught of what it may bring you for anything in the world; for I believe and always shall believe in the truth of what Boccaccio says: That it is better to do and to repent than not to do and to repent . . . and thus we daily with these universal pleasures, enjoying what remains to us of this life, which seems to me a dream.

Indecisive Day

By HARRY KEMP

THE morning didn't know what it wanted to do
From the first upward clamor of the sun
Striking the undersides of somber clouds
To feathery, interlaced vermillion.
Over the tawny tops and slopes of the dunes
Racing madly the stormy sunshine blew.
The morning didn't know what it wanted to do,
So it climbed into indecisive day.
Wind rose, and rain. The architecture fell
Of proud-housed clouds: the eye caught chasms of blue
Soon overswept by veils of diamond grain.
At times a spectral day-time moon waned through,
And then the windy sun spun forth again.
Gulls tossed high through the indecisive day
When morning didn't know what it wanted to do.
There marched a silvery fog that bivouacked through
The purple hollows, in scattered groups like men—
While somewhere a voice like a dream was heard to sing
How indecision can be a lovely thing!

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Suckers Abound at Forty

LIFE BEGINS AT FORTY. By WALTER B. PITKIN. New York: Whittlesey House. 1932. $1.50.

Reviewed by "QUADRAGINTA"

I CONFESS at forty to being an easy mark for any kind of inspirational literature which holds out hope for the perpetuation of a fast-fading youth. Despite an appearance which my friends still flatter me is youthful and a laboriously acquired philosophy of life more or less sophisticated in quality, I suffer at bottom from an acute consciousness of a waist measurement which is becoming too long and a slowing up of my service at tennis.

I have managed at various times in the forty years to avoid falling a victim to Billy Sunday, Coué, Freud, Aimée Semple McPherson, and Vash Young, but Mr. Pitkin's direct stab at my aging midriff caught me unawares and I found myself surreptitiously slinking away into a corner to see what consolation it might offer.

He appears at first sight to lead one up into the high places of the earth. Such chapter headings as "We Enter, Envying," "Youth in the Red," "Fools Die Young," "Learning After Forty," and the like, do indeed serve to buck one up and make him feel that real life is just at hand. "I shall argue," says Mr. Pitkin in his first chapter, "that many millions of our citizens can get much more out of their fourth, fifth, and sixth decades of life than out of any of the first, simply by learning how to live and how to make the most of opportunities within reach."

I read eagerly forward and learn among other things that many youths are very foolish, that on the whole there are less fools alive after forty than before, that Nicholas Murray Butler, Michael Pupin, Walter S. Gifford, and Thomas W. Lamont didn't really start till they were forty. I read further forward and learn that many exceptional individuals are younger after forty than they were before and that it behooves one to be an exceptional individual. I learn that one ought to learn how to play with more intelligence and less expenditure of energy. I learn that a hobby is a useful thing.

All the time I am looking for those methods of making the most of one's opportunities of which Mr. Pitkin speaks so charmingly in his first chapter, but somehow I fail to find anything that I haven't heard before somewhere—and it all seems to have a sort of reminiscent flavor of Rotary club luncheons or revival meetings or college lectures on hygiene. I am afraid I have become suspicious. My suspicions grow as I come on a chapter called "The New World" with facile predictions about the population of America in 1970. "A few large statements can be made about 1975," says Mr. Pitkin, "with more assurance than about 1935." Probably this is true—at least with more safety for the predictor. But somehow all this makes me more suspicious about the statistical basis of Mr. Pitkin's predictions. Statistics he evidently uses, because he says, "Five years ago, in fact, I completed a survey and analysis of the 'adequate opportunities' for superior workers during the next generation; and was driven to a forecast which, at that time, struck me as gloomy and inescapable. I have, in the last two years, made further studies which wash away all the gloom. Utopia is already in sight."

From then on, as Mr. Pitkin wanders through this discussion of the best minds and of what those who have them ought to do and of what we all ought to do, I become fairly and completely disillusioned—in fact I become quite sceptical as to whether Mr. Pitkin really knows anything more about it than the rest of us.

Even at that, weakling that I am, when he winds up "At forty you will be wiser and happier than at thirty. At fifty you will be clearer, steadier, and surer than at forty. At sixty you will be planning automobile trips to Mexico, a new sailboat, a fresh study of your village finances"—at that point, so curious are the influences of emotions on what we call our minds, that I am almost led to believe that I could be quite a fellow even after forty. Which I suppose doesn't hurt me.

REPRODUCED FROM A CONTEMPORARY CARTOON BY BRADLEY IN THE "CHICAGO DAILY NEWS."

An Era in Politics

FAREWELL TO REFORM. By JOHN CHAMBERLAIN. New York: Horace Liveright. 1932. $3.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE

ORDINARILY a book stands without reference to the age, sex, or color of its author. But here is a book about the generation that has passed off the stage save for a few last remnants, and this book is written by a man in the late twenties representing a generation that is just marching on the stage. The book's importance may be somewhat gauged by this most intelligent view of the worth of one generation through the eyes of its successor. This book is improperly titled, for the story is not the story of reform; it is the story of the political attitude of certain dominant leaders, the ruling minority who controlled public opinion and thereby influenced the machinery of government, more or less, during the last quarter of the old century and the first decade and a half of the new.

Mr. Chamberlain wisely gets down to the roots of the movement that were the climax of the Armageddon in June, 1912. He traces those roots in the days of the greenbackers and the grangers in the seventies and eighties.

His story of the first sturdy appearance of political life from those roots in the Populist movement of the 'nineties, which flowered in Bryanism, is carefully written and wisely conceived. He knows what he is talking about. This flower of Bryanism fruited in the first decade of the new century in the insurgency of La Follette and his followers, and the progressivism of Roosevelt and his onward marching "Christian soldiers." La Follette and Roosevelt led separate but parallel movements going in the same general direction but never merging. La Follette was more truly a crusader than Roosevelt. La Follette was never ready to compromise. He would fail for the dot of an i and the cross of a t. Roosevelt was always glad to take half a loaf. Yet, curiously, La Follette was a better political organizer than Roosevelt. Roosevelt was never able to send the word thrilling down the line in his county or state, or in any county or state; whereas La Follette, in Wisconsin, could generally command obedience in matters of principle or of patronage. Wisconsin under La Follette for the first twenty years of this century was a fairly perfect Republican machine comparable with any party machine erected anywhere in the United States. Not even the Quays, the Penroses, and the Vares in Pennsylvania were more able to stand up against their enemies than Robert La Follette stood in his day of power. Roosevelt was willing to use the other man's machinery for his end; not La Follette. Both were battling against the existing order, broadly against plutocracy. But they were reformers only in this, that both La Follette and Roosevelt and their followers were trying to use the government as an agency of human welfare. That was the real heart of the movement which Mr. Chamberlain has so faithfully described. Roosevelt and La Follette and their followers were after the evidence of things, the substance of things hoped for. The idea they held in common was that by checking greed and removing ignorance from public life the average man could find a decent standard of living in security and in some sort of perpetuity, and that the man above the average could rise according to his qualities, to whatever heights his talents entitled him to go, only assuming that he was returning, as he rose, some social service to his fellows. That was the core of the whole movement in our politics from 1875 to 1915, forty years of fighting.

Mr. Chamberlain is entirely correct in assuming that the war broke the back of this movement, the thing he calls reform. The war did even more than that; no one knows just how much more at this time, and about all that the ancient and battered survivors of Armageddon can hope for is that out of the war will come some further roots of the shattered parent plant.

If one might gild this particular lily, one would complain because Mr. Chamberlain has not realized the geographical limitations of his reform movement. But the real quarrel with Mr. Chamberlain which the surviving remnants of old fighters would have is upon the thesis he develops in the last two chapters. This thesis seems to be that all this reform was futile, that it was mere sound and fury ending in nothing. As a matter of fact, the results of the forty years of fighting may be assessed about as this: the establishment in the Constitution of the income tax, the direct election of United States Senators, and Woman Suffrage, the all but universal adoption of the direct primaries, the establishment in twenty states of initiative and referendum, of a workable commission form of government in a considerable majority of American small cities, cities under half a million. Generally these were political changes. In Washington the reformers left certain usable weapons which will be there if they ever get to the White House, and which even now sometimes work on the side of the angels—notably, the Tariff Commission, the Federal Trade Commission, the Interstate Commerce Commission, the present fairly liberal Supreme Court, a modification of the Cannon rules of the House, the postal savings bank, and our present banking system. These changes, political and economic, were worth the forty years of fighting. But even they were not the real first fruits of the seeds the greenbackers and the grangers sowed fifty years ago or more. These fruits of reform are found in the sheer joy of fighting the good fight, of not taking one's licking lying down, of following the vision of young men and of seeing dreams come true. These are purely spiritual gains—attitudes that reflect the common courage, wisdom, and honesty of a generation. They affect the posterity more strongly than institutions. Unless they are found in the hearts of a people, progress stops. For "without vision the people perish." It was the vision of the reformers that kept the fight going. And after all it was the fight and not the specific gains and loot of battle that mattered. These must quickly perish and pass. But the love of the ever-changing thing called liberty, the sense of indignation under injustice, the pluck that inspired the fight,—all these are inheritances which may have some lasting value.

This phase of the "Farewell to Reform" Mr. Chamberlain does not seem to realize. Its value he underestimates in an otherwise first rate story of a great day in American politics.

Roving Memories

AMID THESE STORMS. By WINSTON S. CHURCHILL. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1932. $3.50.

Reviewed by STANLEY WENT

HERE are a couple of dozen sketches, essays, whatever you like to call them, thrown together to make a sizable book. Some of them are just Mr. Churchill's *obiter dicta*, as in the opening pages of more or less random speculations on what might have been the result had the author had "A Second Choice" (the title) at various high moments of his life: for instance, supposing he had had a revolver in his hand one day during the South African War when he came face to face with General Botha. Others, like "Parliamentary Government and the Economic System," delivered as the Romanes Lecture at Oxford, are the carefully written essays of a man who not only writes brilliantly but thinks sagely. The majority, however, are personal reminiscences of one kind or another—"The Battle of Sidney Street," in which the mature Winston admits that the youthful Home Secretary would probably have been well advised to temper valor with discretion in dealing with a gang of beleaguered murderers; "The German Splendor," a pre-war visit to the Kaiser's army manœuvres; "The Irish Treaty," "My Spy Story," and half a dozen others.

Many of them naturally deal with war times, and one sees the irrepressible Winston ranging ubiquitously from the command of the Admiralty to that of a battalion in the trenches, and back again to Whitehall as Minister of Munitions. One of the most interesting of the war-time

WINSTON CHURCHILL.
A Cartoon by Low, from "Lions and Lambs" (Harcourt, Brace).

reminiscences is "A Day with Clemenceau," in which the indomitable old Tiger personally conducts Mr. Churchill, on a mission from Lloyd George, along the whole of the line, insists on getting mixed up in a battle (*"C'est mon grand plaisir,"* he averred in answer to protests), and returns to Paris at the end of a seventeen-hour day as fresh as a daisy. "Personally," Mr. Churchill admits, "I was quite tired."

One could quote indefinitely from these pages. Compared with other books that Mr. Churchill has written, this is, of course, unimportant. If it were not for those others, it would establish the author's reputation as a writer of vivid, nervous prose, with an unsurpassed sense of dramatic values.

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The Conclusion of an Age

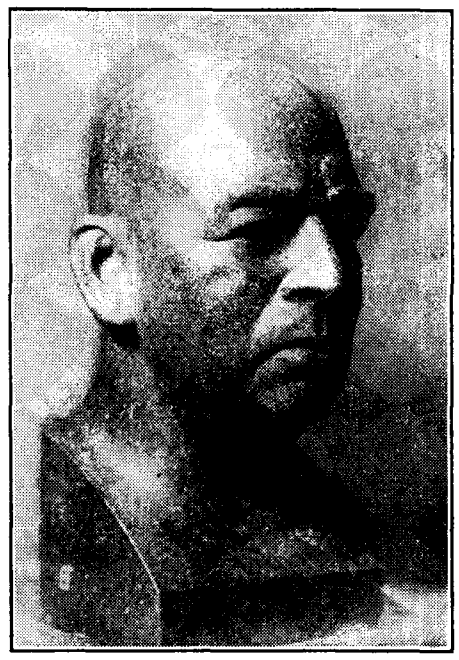
A CULTURAL HISTORY OF THE MODERN AGE. By EGON FRIEDELL. Translated by Charles Francis Atkinson. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 3 vols. 1930, 1931, 1932. $5 per volume.
Reviewed by WILLIAM HARLAN HALE

ONE of the things said most frequently about history today is that history has no real truth. To many of us it seems that a historical textbook is a contradiction in terms: if it is real history, it cannot be real text. Mr. Forgotten Man has as much right, not only to his own interpretation, but also to his facts of history, as Professors Robinson and Rostovzeff have. After all, it is true that no treatise on a given era mentions every fact pertaining to the subject; if it did, we would take just as long to read it as others took to live through the era it describes. Ranke and McMaster had to select their facts, even as van Loon and Wells. The difference between them chiefly is that the latter group made history their adventure, while the former made it their labor.

If you still adhere to the formula that history is a vast accumulation of fact which stands as True—to which items can be added, but from which none can ever be subtracted—then such a work as Egon Friedell's now completed "Cultural History of the Modern Age"* will arouse no joy in you. But if you are inclined to accept the notion that history is a variable thing, changing its character through the years in accordance with the people who contemplate it, then you will feel these volumes to be important. Friedell has written a work which is interesting to two classes of people: the people who are interested in Friedell's viewpoint, and the people who are interested in the history of history. We in America, in view of our distance from the author, are likely to belong to the latter class.

The first outstanding thing about the work is that it regards the "modern age" under observation as a completed entity, a finished whole. According to Friedell, the epoch which began roughly with the Renaissance is no vague stretch of time, destined to go interminably in the bigger-and-better Charles A. Beard manner; it is an organic being, and its life has now rounded itself out, and come to conclusion. What lies before us is another age—as different from the so-called Modern as that was different from the Mediaeval, or from the Classical, or from any one of a dozen other cultural cycles which we superficially designate with schoolboy names. This modern era began in the way that all life begins: in a shock, a trauma, an illness—an "incubation period." The climax of that disease of change and creation took place in the middle of the fourteenth century: its immediate symbol was the Black Death, a scourge that swept Europe and left it desolate. And today, Friedell surmises, we stand in the middle of a new period of upset and incubation. The World War may have been the crisis. Perhaps the intimate result of the war, namely the present economic collapse, is the crisis. Who can tell? But all of us can tell one thing: the visage of the world today has almost nothing in common with its visage in the days before 1914.

Every major work in history is written around some theory or other; but in few is the personal, philosophical, intuitive element so predominant as it is in Friedell. That is the weakness of the book in point of scholarship. That also is its force. Another era of readers joyfully accepted the thought which underlay Macaulay's "History of England": namely, the thought that all the development of nations and all the glory of the race had reached sublime culmination in the England of 1850. A different age accepted the philosophy which underlay Hegel's works: namely, the thought that history is the continual progress toward the eventual fulfilment of the divine order. Our own latest age found a profound reflection of its spirit in Spengler's "Decline of the West," in which the optimistic upward-and-on philosophy finally gave way to the destructive prophecy of a great poet and a mournful visionary. The philosophy which underlies Friedell, in its recognition of cultural change and submergence, comes directly out of Spengler. But it harks back to older



FROM A BUST OF OSWALD SPENGLER BY FRITZ BEHN.

historians in its perception of the endurance of life and the survival of activity. It is aware of conclusion; but it also sees that there is no end of beginnings.

A portrait of modern times which starts off in the belief that all history is saga, myth, continually to be reinterpreted by later man to suit his own mentality, would not be expected to have overmuch respect for those immutable economic laws which the school of Karl Marx laid down. An author whose intent was manifestly to write a biography of the modern soul, and who is steeped in the world of German poetry and thought, would naturally tend to regard hard materialist causes as inadequate explanations indeed. Friedell does not believe that a society is identical with its economic life. He believes in the reality of a spirit above matter; he believes that first comes the dream, and then the deed. "The true cause of every higher development is some great idea, which takes so powerful a hold on the masses that it renders them creative." Thus the Renaissance was not a historical accident or an economic manifestation which was later converted into esthetic theory; it was first and foremost an idea. In this case the idea was contained in the theological victory of "nominalism" over "realism" in the later Middle Ages, and in the resulting realization of the triumphal nature of individual man as against universal institutions or abstractions. The new universe—even despite the astronomy of Copernicus—became geocentric; whereas the medieval universe—despite the astronomy of Ptolemy—was theocentric, was larger and more spacious. The Middle Ages came to an end when God came to earth, and lodged himself in man. Let us say, better, that man came to imagine himself as a sort of God. And this was the idea that made the Renaissance.

This Renaissance, with its curious mixture of innovation and revival, popular art and cloistered pedantry, skepticism and self-worship, could of course only be a passing phase: "it was the era which no longer believed and had not yet arrived at knowing." It is in the later fifteenth century that Friedell sees the true nature of the modern period—the theme-song, as it were—coming to expression. The history of this whole succeeding period is the history of rationalism (and that includes also the periodic escapes from rationalism). It finds its first great flower in Descartes, whose philosophy embodied the entire mind and spirit of the dominant modern race, the French. The happiest hour of this period is the eighteenth century—when religion, literature, science, art, and society all agreed to make rationalism their basis. The tragedy of rationalism lay in the vast impulse which it gave to practical, expansive, economic, monetary human endeavor, and the decline of art and faith which that impulse caused. The nineteenth century was the time when art, pathetically exiled from the "gas-light age," tried to reassert its birthright. It tried in the many forms of romanticism which it inherited from Rousseau and the *Sturm und Drang;* it tried in the exotic and perfumed works of the mid-century; it tried in the tangled and neurasthenic fads of the *fin du siècle;* and at the last, tired, torn, deserted, often meaningless, it went down in the glorious defeat of our own century. In art, in religion, and now indeed in economic life, there has been a grand Collapse of Reality. Friedell traces the threads with roaming generality as well as with close detail.

The Middle Ages died when the ancient theological proposition *universalia sunt realia* was defeated. Nominalism, individualism, the new rationalism then had their sway. But the final discovery of the modern epoch (according to Friedell) is that there are no *realia:* in Einstein and physics, in abstract art, in many philosophic paths, we have reached the void. And in the recognition, conscious or unconscious, of this irreversible climax lies the conclusion of an age.

Rounding out the details of his description, and peering into possible futures, Friedell's poetic vision goes a bit pale. His political conservatism causes him to reject the idea of communism as a new order of being. His intense aversion to most of what is Anglo-American causes him to reject the idea of American dominance and a flourish of the western world. He believes, at all events, in the future of a cultural Germany. That is his confidence. And it is also his weakness.

For the main defect of this ambitious flight through our yesterdays and toward our tomorrows is its excessive concern with the country of the author's birth; its frequently reactionary, aristocratic tone; and its over-impressionism (which is fascinating as historical review, but which gets into a blind alley when tall prophecies are attempted).

Patriotic pride—especially when grounded on the native land's cultural past—is a justifiable thing; but the atmosphere grows oppressive when, for example in Friedell's second volume, we are

COPERNICUS.

delivered treatises on such writers as Gerstenberg, Leisewitz, Lenz, Klinger, Bürger, Hamann, and Jacobi, at the expense of far better known non-German artists who were contemporary to them. The nationalistic tone must seem overstressed even to a German reader when he finds Friedell's discussion of nineteenth century romanticism centering so closely around the brothers Schlegel that it barely mentions Keats and Shelley. Frederick the Great gets twenty pages (of masterly analysis, it is true); the battle of Sadowa gets three pages; poet Grillparzer gets two and a half; while Abraham Lincoln gets just ten lines. There is a brilliant treatment of German foreign policy in the years leading up to the crises of 1870 and 1914. But very little is said of the industrial revolution and of England's economic leadership in the new world of the nineteenth century; and the American revolution is curtly dismissed with the statement that it was caused by a tax on tea. There is extravagant mention of the satirical playwright Offenbach and of Nestroy, but never a hint of the far more vivid and compelling Gilbert and Sullivan. There are pages and pages on the German theatre movement (the *"Freie Bühne"*) at the end of the century, and many on Shaw; but there is not one word on any American writer living in the twentieth century.

Yet, however we may criticize Friedell's soundness in particular judgments, or however much we may lament his overheated enthusiasms for minor Germans at the expense of major foreigners, or however disappointed we may be at the thinness of his forecasts—we are nevertheless faced with a work of great enterprise and vision. It is the product of a sharp, versatile mind—a mind ready with peppery wit, and teeming with observations that send us running to our encyclopedias. It is the major performance of a scholar whose maturity does not prevent him from roaming through the world with a child's joy of discovery.

A word as to translation. Friedell has won fame abroad for the vigor and clear beauty of his style. But his translator, Charles Francis Atkinson, has not even kept the vigor. He has hopelessly muffed the meanings. For example: Friedell concludes an outstanding critique of Macaulay's writings with the words *"das Ganze schwimmt in einem wohltuenden Dunstkreis schöner Sachlichkeit."* Atkinson makes it: "The ensemble floats in a benevolent aura of beautiful sincerity." Now *"das Ganze"* means more than that empty word, "the ensemble"; *"wohltuend"* is not the same as "benevolent"; *"schön"* does not have to mean "beautiful"; and *"Sachlichkeit"* is anything but "sincerity." What Friedell tried to say was: "His whole work hovers in a comfortable atmosphere of pleasant concreteness"—which is a very different thing.

Atkinson performed a masterly English version of the two volumes of Spengler; and that fact makes the present translation—flighty, ungrammatical, inept—nothing less than a disgrace to his name.

Flashing Armor

(*Continued from page* 337)

they come from a source in the hearts of the beholders.

But our clerical advisers have chosen the wrong period when they urge us to go back to the manliness of the Three Musketeers (curious eidolons, incidentally, for the clergy to choose). They would have done better to cite the subtle and passionate Stendhal of a generation earlier, who in a decade of relapse after devastating war and great men wreaked on circumstances, depicted a youth not tamely submitting to the demoralization and decadence of his time, but flinging himself upon danger in a passionate search for an experience that even in such a time could be heroic if not spacious.

If we are to get a twentieth century virility it must be a virility of our own, and not stale heroics and swashbucklings and sentimentalisms of a nineteenth century dead for us except as an element deeply blended in the complexities which are ourselves.

The Saturday Review of LITERATURE

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Mr. Krutch's Scepticism

EXPERIENCE AND ART: Some Aspects of the Esthetics of Literature. By JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH. New York: Harrison Smith & Robert Haas. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by LOUIS GRUDIN

IN his new book Mr. Krutch attempts a revaluation of our esthetic beliefs in terms of the skeptical and provisional logic familiar to readers of "The Modern Temper." His defense of the art of literature can hardly be characterized as "a sweeping negation." A defense of art based upon the hardened and sharpened sensibility of modern skepticism is a feat of courage, to say the least.

"Without the constant activity of the contemporary artist," says Mr. Krutch, "we should presently find ourselves in a world which we no longer knew . . . the literature of the past would seem wholly fabulous while our own experience would be fragmentary, meaningless, and even mean." And although he feels that "we are overwhelmed by the diversity of knowledge," he closes his book with the hope that "some unifying aim, some hierarchy of values, some sense that something is supremely worth while, must impose itself upon us with a self-justifying inevitability."

Nevertheless such a realization is not possible in terms of Mr. Krutch's philosophy. The task of making the interrelation of experience and art intelligible is to show what sort of experience constitutes the practice of an art—and of what sort of arts living or experiencing consists. Mr. Krutch risks a number of passionate, loosely associated guesses; his approach contains no promise of a method or rationale of procedure for such a problem.

Since "Experience and Art" is assured of widespread praise and influence, I shall limit myself with a good conscience to consideration of the logical difficulties which make his position an untenable one, and to the fact that it is incapable of an intelligible account of the dilemma in which he finds himself.

Mr. Krutch conceives the world in terms of an unknowable, everchanging flux of "external reality" behind the phenomena of an inhuman, irrational, chaotic "nature." Opposed to our experience of such a world is "the realm of art," where it is revised into unreal yet convincing fantasies ministering to "human needs." This view leads him to an increasing emphasis of the futility of knowledge, to exasperated self-accusations, arrayed in a hair shirt of ultimate skepticism, and to embittered dispraise of "the imperfections of our senses . . . the faultiness of our deductions . . . the defects of our experience . . . the chaos of natural events."

"Life baffles and almost seems to mock (but) the artist selects and classifies what nature mingles in hideous confusion." Art follows "an irresistible tendency" to "substitute a modified image for reality." It is "a mimic world . . . nature distorted by desire." And he fears that "the sense which art gives us of coming closer and closer to reality is a pure delusion."

Works of art "maintain some sort of harmony which nature perpetually violates." Yet he refers to "the great inertia of nature, the inevitabilities from which we cannot wander far," and almost in the same breath, to "nature's lack of consistent intention." He does not find his claims for her immunity from human knowledge, her "laws," her "discontinuity," and her "flux," incompatible notions. Again, at one moment human beings are "relatively unplastic organisms in a relatively *unplastic* environment"; at another, this same environment is a world of chaotic change; at still another, "the impermanence of human works and the diversity and instability of art" are contrasted with "the stability of nature"; and at still another, "works of art . . . *do not change and do not pass.*"

Thus Mr. Krutch foists upon all imaginative works the contradictions of a private mood which threatens to become "relatively unplastic." The artist, whom he calls "omnipotent creator" of a realm of delusion in a world of frustration, is soon defined accordingly as an omnipotent liar; and Mr. Krutch's attempt to qualify this characterization only intensifies it. His demand for "the illusion of reality" in art amounts to the definition of art as sheer self-deception. His conviction of human imperfection and the notion that art is just as selective and incomplete as experience only ends in the conclusion that art adds incompleteness to incompleteness and compounds our imperfection.

The typical defects of his argument rise from the central weakness of his thesis, his belief that the realm of art is "an escape from frustration." The experience of frustration is necessarily an episode of some sort of imaginative action, some attempt to "alter nature." Such an experience is thereby itself a part of the very practice of some art as Mr. Krutch himself defines it. How, therefore, can art be a refuge from something which is incidental to its very activity?

Revolt and Revelation

THE COLOURED DOME. By FRANCIS STUART. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1933.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

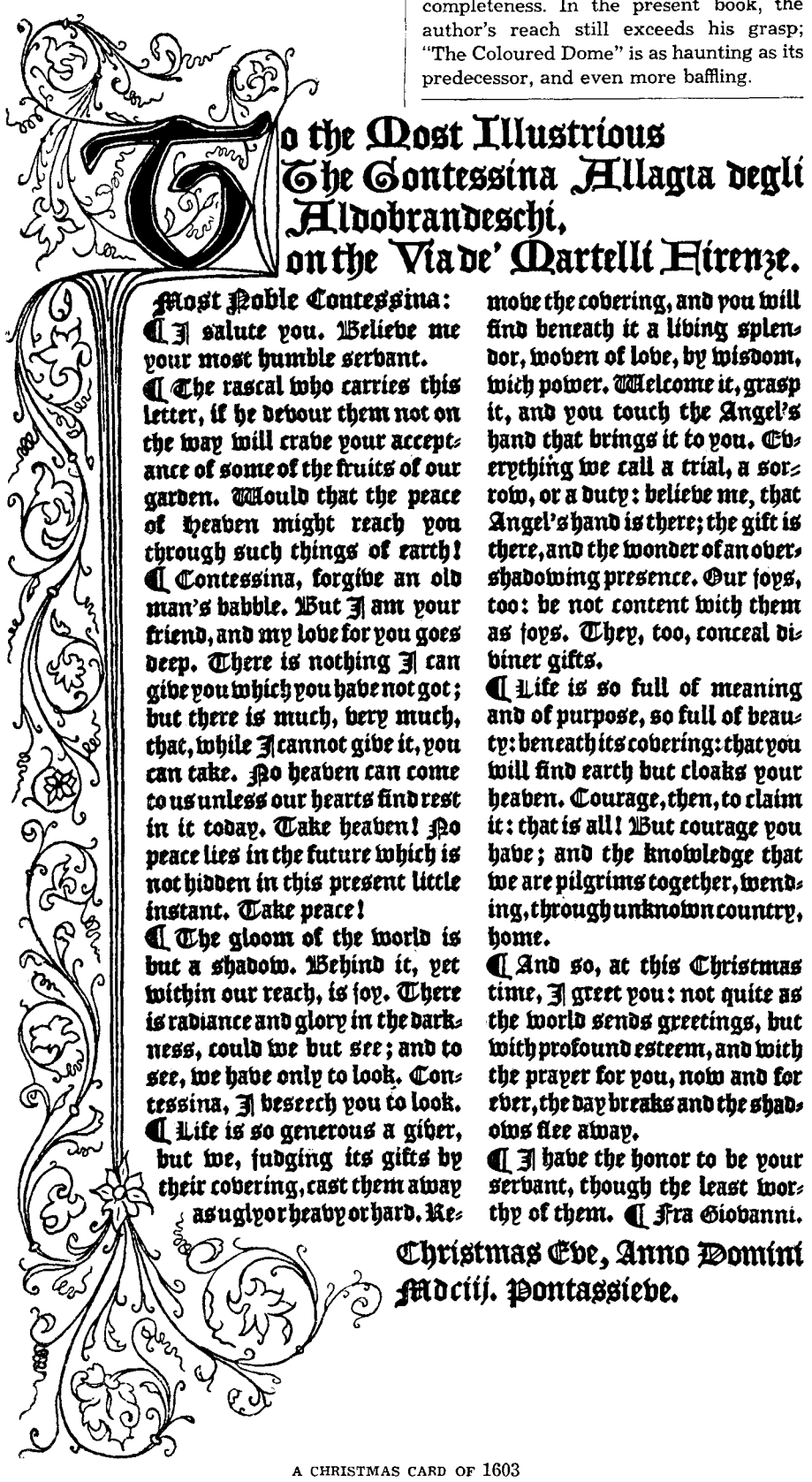
HERE is the second novel by Mr. Francis Stuart, whose "Pigeon Irish" was so moving an experience last season. "Pigeon Irish" was, it will be remembered, concerned superficially with the next war, and fundamentally with the mystic view of the universe; its theme was that it is better to lose the whole world and keep the soul of what one loves. It was a haunting and a somewhat baffling book; Mr. Stuart's own mystical conviction as to what was of eternal value was so strongly felt as to shine compellingly through the book; but since that conviction was rather a matter of inspiration than of reason, it was impossible for Mr. Stuart to communicate it, and for the reader to share it, in its completeness. In the present book, the author's reach still exceeds his grasp; "The Coloured Dome" is as haunting as its predecessor, and even more baffling.

It is concerned with an Irish revolution, whose leader, Tulloolagh, is, though no one knows it, a woman. She brings, for the first time, some meaning and purpose into the life of Garry Delea, the hero, by calling upon him to volunteer to be executed, to save the lives of a number of prisoners; and Garry, who has not taken any active part in the revolt, accepts the martyrdom joyfully. So long as he believes that he has only a few hours to live, the earth and every one in it become strangely beautiful to him; spring begins in his heart, to use the author's own symbolism which runs through the book. He and Tulloolagh are imprisoned together, and he discovers that she is a woman; they fulfil their springtime. But then they are pardoned, and the beatific vision fades. The earth, any yard of which would have been enough to occupy Garry's contemplation forever, as he had believed under sentence of death, turns dull and dry. He and Tulloolagh are free to do what they please together, but the ecstasy is gone; as some one else has said, "Summer is not worthy of the spring."

The problem is certainly a real one; even from a bald summary it will be clear that a love born of such exaltation and danger could not maintain itself at the same pitch in the ordinary world; and no summary can do justice to the breathless poignance with which the author's style conveys every instant between the sentence of death and the reprieve. But the solution leaves one with a sense of something wanting. Garry sinks deeper and deeper into despair; the author calls it winter in his heart; he seems to mean what the mystics have called "the dark night of the soul." And then Garry finds happiness in the mere acceptance, more, the deliberate seeking, of the most utter misery and degradation; if I am not mistaken in my interpretation, Garry finds his peace in a willingness to remain ever in the dark night of the soul, with the sense of God withdrawn, although even the mystics who were content to be damned for the love of God found that night all but unendurable. And so the book ends.

No one can doubt Mr. Stuart's burning sincerity in what he says; no one can doubt that this book has come out of intense experience of his own, so intimate that one must have some acquaintance with the mystics to begin to comprehend it. But just because it is so vital to the author, the final vision cannot be quite credible to any one else. The mood in which it seems the last pages must have been written is one which is incommunicable, and one lays down the book feeling that its author demands more of the soul than Saint Theresa, and promises less, for the only hope he gives us is that we shall become able to find joy in pain—but he cannot say how. He leaves us in the dark night and makes no promise of the beatific vision to follow.

The parts of the book are greater than the whole. The emotional mood of each successive scene is always deeply stirring. There is again, as in "Pigeon Irish," a rooted feeling for the Irish country which almost, though not quite, keeps the story on a plane where we can wholly comprehend it. "The Coloured Dome" is all that we could look for, if not quite all that we could hope, from the author of "Pigeon Irish"; and we can still hope for greater things from him.



To the Most Illustrious
The Contessina Allagia degli
Aldobrandeschi,
on the Via de' Martelli Firenze.

Most Noble Contessina: I salute you. Believe me your most humble servant.

The rascal who carries this letter, if he devour them not on the way will crave your acceptance of some of the fruits of our garden. Would that the peace of Heaven might reach you through such things of earth!

Contessina, forgive an old man's babble. But I am your friend, and my love for you goes deep. There is nothing I can give you which you have not got; but there is much, very much, that, while I cannot give it, you can take. No heaven can come to us unless our hearts find rest in it today. Take heaven! No peace lies in the future which is not hidden in this present little instant. Take peace!

The gloom of the world is but a shadow. Behind it, yet within our reach, is joy. There is radiance and glory in the darkness, could we but see; and to see, we have only to look. Contessina, I beseech you to look.

Life is so generous a giver, but we, judging its gifts by their covering, cast them away as ugly or heavy or hard. Remove the covering, and you will find beneath it a living splendor, woven of love, by wisdom, with power. Welcome it, grasp it, and you touch the Angel's hand that brings it to you. Everything we call a trial, a sorrow, or a duty: believe me, that Angel's hand is there; the gift is there, and the wonder of an overshadowing presence. Our joys, too: be not content with them as joys. They, too, conceal diviner gifts.

Life is so full of meaning and of purpose, so full of beauty: beneath its covering: that you will find earth but cloaks your heaven. Courage, then, to claim it: that is all! But courage you have; and the knowledge that we are pilgrims together, wending, through unknown country, home.

And so, at this Christmas time, I greet you: not quite as the world sends greetings, but with profound esteem, and with the prayer for you, now and for ever, the day breaks and the shadows flee away.

I have the honor to be your servant, though the least worthy of them. Fra Giovanni.

Christmas Eve, Anno Domini MDCIIJ. Pontassieve.

A CHRISTMAS CARD OF 1603

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The Saturday Review Recommends

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This Less Recent Book:

THE PERENNIAL BACHELOR. By ANNE PARRISH. *Harpers.*
A novel with a nice satirical turn.

"The Seamen's Friend," a 200 page volume, describing the history of The American Seamen's Friend Society, now in its 105th year, has been completed and published by the Society's Secretary, the Rev. Dr. George Sidney Webster. The Society gives friendly service to sailors in six ports of the United States and ten other ports throughout the world, including, Canada, South America, Europe, and Asia.

The Seamen's Friend Society has been placing loan libraries on ships for more than a century; Mr. William Elling has been its librarian in New York for nearly forty years. Another of its unobtrusive customs is the presentation of a copy of the Bible to each member of every graduating class at the Naval Academy.

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The BOWLING GREEN

The Night After Christmas

By those two sentimental old fools
JOSEPH ALGER, JR., and THAYER CUMINGS

'TWAS the night after Christmas, and all through the house
Not a creature was stirring, excepting a mouse,
And boxes heaped up in each living room chair
Gave proof that the good old St. Nick had been there.
There were boxes, and bunting, and wrapping and string,
And candles, and tinsel, Oh, every old thing!
And a pile of excelsior, making a sight
Like the battle of Waterloo after the fight.
And there in a corner you'll see the new skates
That Millicent opened, and found they weren't mates.
The horn that Marie gave to Jack with a kiss
Is battered and broken and now sounds amiss.

The railroad that Junior received with a shout
Is now, thanks to father, completely worn out.
A scene that was recently tidy and neat
Now looks like an army in headlong retreat—
Not a bit like a household with happiness blessed,
But more like a family that's been dispossessed.

And far in the northland Old Santa perspires
With twenty lame reindeer and seven flat tires.

And there is the music box which little Gwen
Played over and over and over again,
Till old Uncle Albert was driven insane
And shouted, "I'll shoot if you play that again!"

But mother protested, "Now don't interfere,
"Why can't you be decent *one* day in the year?"
"That horrible music is driving me mad,"
Said old Uncle Albert appealing to Dad.
"It's driving you nuts?" replied Dad. "Izzat-so?
"Well, you've only a very short distance to go."
And that's how the argument spread like a fire,
Till finally Uncle called Grandma a liar,
While Gwenny kept churning that awful refrain
Again, and again, and again and again.

And far in the northland Old Santa perspires
With twenty lame reindeer and seven flat tires.

'Twas the night after Christmas . . . upstairs troubled heads
Were trying to sleep as they tossed in their beds.
Poor mother was worrying over mistakes
That a mother at Christmas unfailingly makes.

For example, the book that was meant for John's teacher,
A volume of "Sayings by Henry Ward Beecher,"
Was sent to that rough Mr. Smith, and—oh, dear,
The teacher got "Six Easy Ways to Make Beer."

And Johnny, who usually sleeps like a top,
Was having wild nightmares and just couldn't stop.
A horrible man with the head of a goat
Was shoveling candy right into his throat.
Red candy, and gumdrops, and chocolate creams,
Showing too many sweets never make for sweet dreams.

And far in the northland Old Santa perspires
With twenty lame reindeer and seven flat tires.
His pack is quite empty, his manner is grave,
His shoes are mud-spattered, he's needing a shave.
He mops his hot brow and says, "Whew, what a trip!
"A billion addresses and never a slip.
"I've covered Nebraska and China and Spain,
"In a year I suppose I'll be at it again.
"But now I look forward with keenest enjoyment
"To nearly twelve months of sweet unemployment."

'Twas the night after Christmas, when new things look old,
When even the cuckoo clock has a bad cold.
And the tree is so weak it can't stand any more,
And candy and candle grease cover the floor.
But are we discouraged when Christmas is over
The day in the year when the world is in clover?
After hardships of Christmas does everyone cheer?
Not a bit . . . WE LOOK FORWARD TO CHRISTMAS NEXT YEAR.

❧ ❧

I am much pleased by a "Translation from the Chinese" submitted by a client at the University of Hawaii:—

"I"

The Chinese character for "I"
is two swords,
two selves
opposing each other.
Even in the twenty-seventh century B.C.
men knew well
eternal warfare
between the flesh
and the spirit.

KATHRYN JEAN MACFARLANE.

The most disturbing inquiry received by the Bowling Green lately is a letter from a student in Des Moines. He says, "As a vocational career I have decided to study Literary Criticism," and in regard to the life of a literary critic he asks the following highly pertinent questions:—

1. Importance to society?
2. What is actually done by a person in this profession?
3. Outline a typical day's work.
4. Service to humanity.
5. Chances to learn.
6. Demands for a person in this profession.
7. Seasonal or unseasonal work.
8. Growing importance of the vocation.
9. Chances for advancement.
10. Friends and associations.
11. Length of Literary Critic's day.
12. What are its disadvantages?
13. Necessary preparation for this work.
14. What income may be expected? (At beginning and later.)
15. What effect has the occupation on the social, civic, physical, recreational, and moral life of person indulged in this work?

❧ ❧

Some time ago we lent W. S. H. a copy of that delightful old book, *A Duet,* by A. Conan Doyle. W. S. H. read it on shipboard and though he does not moisten easily he reported that his eyes were damp when he finished. It is the day by day story of a young married couple; it immediately became W. S. H.'s favorite Doyle, and in his customary diligence he rooted about until he found some autograph letters from Doyle concerning the book's original publication. And the pleasantest discovery he made was that good sentimental Dr. Doyle left his regular publisher and gave the MS to Grant Richards—then a beginner in the field—because "this book *ought* to be published by a young married couple."

W. S. H. discovered the following letter written (1898) by Doyle:—

Undershaw,
Hindhead,
Haslemere.

My dear Grant Richards

The only valid reason I can ever give a publisher for quitting him is that I can get better terms. So if I come to you with "A Duet" my terms must be high. But they would be put in a convenient form . . . as thus.

1. No advance.
2. Half yearly accounts.
3. Two shillings per copy on 6/ book.
4. You guarantee to fairly spend £100 in advertising.
5. The form to be such as I approve.

How does this strike you? If too high or too anything then let me know at once.

I propose to sacrifice the serial rights of this book and bring it out at once in book form. This will in itself be an interesting experiment & should, I believe, help the sale of the book materially. To bring it out at a low price would be a second experiment and I think it would be well to try one experiment at a time. Therefore let it be 6/.

The book will be from 60 to 70000 words. Over 50000 are done —so it should be ready for appearance early in March. I shall have what I have done typed without delay.

This is only the English rights of course.

I am on very friendly terms with Smith and must return to him, so don't be hurt when I do so with my next book. The fact is that this book *ought* to be published by a young married couple and so I give you the refusal of it.

I shall be in town on Wednesday morning if you wanted to see me on any point—but I shall be rather rushed.

With kind regards

Yours very truly,
A. CONAN DOYLE.

❧ ❧

John Holmes, Easton, Pa., came across the following oddity circulating in typescript. I think it has undergone some small textual changes since it was first printed in the old Bowling Green in the New York *Evening Post* about ten years ago, but Mr. Holmes spotted it as part of the naive doctrinal controversies which were throng in the Green about that time. I myself had quite forgotten it, and have no copy of the original version; but if it has somewhat altered in the course of secret circulation, there are good theological analogies in that fact.

Mr. Holmes writes, "Please reprint it and let's see if anyone has a copy of the original version in the *Evening Post.* Apparently it pleased someone enough to copy it out and hand it to friends, so it has taken on life of its own. Anyhow, Christmas is the time for meditating such matters."

"A CREED"

SIR:—I note that there is now a good deal of talk about Creeds and whether people do or do not believe them. I myself am not closely acquainted with the details of Athanasian doctrine, etc. I was brought up an Episcopalian (that means, does it not, a church for bishops?), but by and by I worked out a little substitute creed of my own. In case any of your readers are interested, this is how it goes:—

I believe in the inexplicable universe, too great to be comprehended—as it was in the beginning, and (probably) ever shall be.

I believe in "the army of unalterable law," and equally in the wit and courage of the human mind, able and increasingly persistent to take a ride on the back of that law—as a bare-footed farmer's boy rides on the broad chine of a patient horse.

I believe in the volatile spirit of man, ignited in the early slime, younger brother of the eagle and the redwood tree; born of fire and tolls and printer's ink, crucified daily by his fellows and his own inordinate desires; daily descending into hell for his own follies; daily ascending into heaven by surprising merriments; daily judging the quick and the dead according to the validity of his own reason.

I believe, even where I do not practise, the terrific radicalism of the Christian code; but I hold it legitimate for men of thoughtful conscience to whittle away that code here and there to suit themselves. And for men who are not of thoughtful conscience, anything is rationally permissible, for they will act to please themselves anyway, and society is organized to restrain them when necessary.

I believe in the minds of poets and musicians; in the problems of mathematicians and doctors; in the Three Stars of Orion's Belt and the web of the spider; in the Woolworth Building and the flukes of Moby Dick. These accepted and cherished, such clumsy minutiæ as creeds become farcical; and he who would napkin religion in a creed is no more sensible than he who would deny Watt's experiment because the 8:10 from Buffalo was an hour late.

I believe in God; but anyone who can glibly explain in a hundred words just what he means by that great phrase is unworthy of his belief.

Probably there has never been an unbeliever.

THURIBLE.

❧ ❧

At this season I always get a perverse pleasure in remembering that when the *Christmas Carol* was first published Dickens regarded it as a failure. It appeared shortly before Christmas 1843, and though the first edition (6000 copies) sold out immediately, Dickens lamented that the profit on them was only £230. He wrote to Forster "I had set my heart and soul upon a Thousand. My year's bills, unpaid, are so terrific, that all the energy and determination I can possibly exert will be required to clear me . . . if I do not reduce my expenses I shall be ruined past all mortal hope of redemption."

I remember once having seen somewhere a copy of a letter Dickens wrote at that time in which he lamented something like this: "Would you believe it, my publishers only printed one advertisement of the Carol before Christmas . . . my poor little book will never be heard of."

❧ ❧

Since writing here about *The Cricket on the Hearth* I've looked up its history in Forster. It's interesting to note that this famous fable was begun in Dickens's characteristic mixture of sentimentalism and shrewdness. The germ of the idea was a projected weekly paper to be called *The Cricket.* He wrote to Forster:—

"I would come out, sir, with a prospectus on the subject of the Cricket that should put everybody in a good temper, and make such a dash at people's fenders and arm-chairs as hasn't been made for many a long day. . . . I would at once sit down upon their very hobs . . . and I would chirp, chirp, chirp away in every number until I chirped it up to—well, you shall say how many hundred thousand!"

Instead of a magazine, the idea emerged as a Christmas story in December 1845. My suspicion that its real affinity was for the stage seems to have been sound, for I learn in Forster that it was at once dramatized in several versions, as play and pantomime. The author of one dramatization was our old friend Edward Stirling, who wrote my favorite chromo, *The Ragpicker of Paris.* Extraordinary though it seems, by January 11, 1846, versions of the *Cricket* were being played simultaneously at twelve London theatres.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

Theatre-goers, whose memory reaches back for some years, will remember the discussion created by the production on the stage of the French playwright, Eugene Brieux's, "Damaged Goods." M. Brieux, whose death occurred a few days ago, was not, however, a single-play author, though it was by one work that he was principally known in America. Quite to the contrary, for twenty years he produced a play a year. He was elected to the Académie Française in 1910, and he was also made a Commander of the Legion of Honor.

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FROM GRAVE TO GAY

No Longer a Blessing

OUR OBSOLETE CONSTITUTION. By WILLIAM KAY WALLACE. New York: John Day Co. 1932. $2.

Reviewed by FABIAN FRANKLIN

MR. WALLACE'S thesis is two-fold—that the Constitution has actually become obsolete, and that its purposes are so out of key with the needs of our time that a better Constitution should be established in its place.

The author would have been better advised to omit the first proposition altogether. For, while his argument in support of his main contention—that the Constitution is unsuited to our age and ought to be replaced by a wholly different one—is impressive, what he says about the actual obsoleteness of the Constitution is extravagant and inconclusive. One of the chief grounds upon which he bases his assertion is the adoption of the income tax amendment, which he regards as an abandonment of a "fundamental doctrine of the Constitution"—the sacredness of property rights—and accordingly a response to the demand for radical change that has arisen in recent years. But the fact is that a Federal income tax was included in the Wilson tariff act, and approved by so old-fashioned a conservative as President Cleveland, nearly forty years ago, and was pronounced valid under the old Constitution by four of the nine Justices of the Supreme Court in 1895; to say nothing of a unanimous decision of the Supreme Court in 1880, sustaining a previous income tax law. Similarly overstrained is the author's view of the woman suffrage amendment; and, while more is to be said for his view of the prohibition amendment, he fails to make any mention of the tremendous reaction against that amendment, which quite alters the case he builds upon it.

Very different is the merit of the argument Mr. Wallace makes upon the thesis to which his book is chiefly devoted. Radical books are apt to make a conservative feel very much as the great evangelist felt about song—that the devil has all the good tunes; and Mr. Wallace's book is no exception to the rule. His argument is persuasive and alluring; nor is it easy to find any counter-argument possessing these qualities in anything like the same degree.

The cardinal reason, according to our author, why the Constitution should be regarded as no longer a blessing but an obstacle, is that the Constitution was designed to be the bulwark of economic individualism and that in our industrialized age economic individualism is no longer to be desired. This idea is stressed throughout the book; a single brief quotation will suffice to convey it:

> Mass production requires us to take cognizance not of the individual worker as a part of the mechanism of industrial enterprise, but of the social or "mass-man." The individual regains his personality during his hours of leisure; at work he is merged in the social order. . . . The transfer of the centre of gravity in the social order from the individual to the group requires a complete readjustment in the method of administration and organization. Political method no longer suffices. Industrial method now offers a surer social technique of its own.

On the purely economic side, Mr. Wallace's position rests on a solid basis. Every one must recognize that through the prodigious advances recently made in industrial methods economic independence for all has been "brought within the range of the attainable." Whether the broader human factors that enter into the problem are as manageable as the author believes them to be is, however, a different question.

Granted his objective, and granted further that public opinion is prepared to take whatever steps can be peacefully taken for its attainment, not much fault can be found with Mr. Wallace's proposal of a complete change in our Constitution. Certainly the objective could not be attained without such a change; and though the change would be a revolution, it could conceivably be accomplished by peaceful means. Indeed the means need not even be of such extra-legal character as the author seems to think essential; instead of the change being effected by a revolutionary Convention which he imagines springing out of the overwhelming demand of the nation, it could be brought about in a perfectly legal way under Article V of our Constitution if the public demand were indeed overwhelming.

But there's the rub. Mr. Wallace nowhere shows any realization of the profound change in the deeper elements of life that is involved in giving up the individualist idea and individualist ideals. Attachment to that idea and those ideals may be far more deeply rooted in the minds and hearts of men than might be judged from the manifestations of discontent in time of trouble. Long before that revolutionary Convention is called for by the general voice of the nation, long before Article V is invoked for the same purpose by state after state throughout the Union, it may be discovered that individualism in the industrialized twentieth century, like Christianity in the rationalized eighteenth century, has a good deal of life in it yet.

GOVERNMENT HAS HAD ITS BATTLES BEFORE.
Reproduced from a cartoon by Nast.

Cure for Gotham's Ills

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH NEW YORK. By NORMAN THOMAS and PAUL BLANSHARD. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1932. $2.

Reviewed by ROYAL J. DAVIS

NOT a question, but a statement, the title of this book covers the three-fold purpose of its authors: to set forth the political and economic evils of the metropolis, to lay bare their causes, and to offer a remedy. The setting forth of the evils is done, for the most part, picturesquely, but with no loss of impressiveness on that account. Once more we see—as will be seen again and again in humorous or serious presentation—the incredible procession that crossed the Seabury witness-stand: Sheriff Farley with his magic tin box; Dr. Walker with his checks which, by an uncanny coincidence equalled exactly half of the fees charged by four other doctors for workmen's compensation cases having to do with city employees; Register McQuade and the thirty-four other McQuades whom he supported with money the source or sources of which he was unable to recall; Paul Block, whose ten-year-old son's innocent wonder how a Mayor could live well on $25,000 a year led to a "beneficence" of $246,000 to Mayor Walker; and, finally, Walker himself with his halting explanations of the famous letter of credit for $10,000, and the Sisto $26,000—and the shadow of Sherwood.

But political graft, while a large part of the story, is not all or even the most important part of it. If the inhabitants of New York are exploited by the politicians and their allies, not only in ways exhibited by the Seabury investigation, but in other ways, as, for example, by the sale to the city of school sites for sums greatly in excess of their market value, they are exploited also by public utility companies, which are imperfectly controlled by the Public Service Commission. Then there is the evil of bad housing, to which a chapter is given.

The causes of these evils the authors display on two levels—an upper level of politics and a deeper level of economics. On the political level they find no better description of Tammy's methods and of the reasons for its success than the old phrase, "fear and favor"—the granting of small favors, including legitimate services, to persons who have nothing but a vote; the granting of stupendous favors to persons who can pay for them; both kinds being coupled with intimidation in varying degree all up and down the line.

It is on the economic level that Messrs. Thomas and Blanshard discern the more important causes of New York's evils. "What is most wrong with New York," they write, "is capitalism near the end of its epoch, not Tammany Hall . . . Tammany's methods merely reflect the prevailing business ethics." The very purpose of their volume is to convince the reader "that the roots of civic corruption in American life lie deep in a predatory economic system and that the fight for clean government is only one battle in the larger struggle for a just social order." By "a just social order," of course, is meant socialism. Must we, then, choose between socialism and Tammany? Ultimately, according to Messrs. Thomas and Blanshard, yes, but they reject the Communist contention that it is either social revolution or nothing and insist that there are improvements which can be made in advance of the millennium.

Meanwhile the present volume affords a lively and useful record of recent revelations, together with a penetrating discussion of their significance.

Irony in the Theatre

DINNER AT EIGHT: A Play in Eleven Scenes. By GEORGE S. KAUFMAN and EDNA FERBER. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1932. $2.

Reviewed by ROBERT WARNOCK

A FAMILIAR partnership has wrought this best of the few new stage hits, which here reaches a reading public less than a week after its first night. Miss Ferber's knack with the basic business of plot and character plus Mr. Kaufman's trenchant wit and infallible sense of theatre were responsible for "Minick" and the playful picture of the theatre's "Royal Family." The product this time is of different kind, two steps nearer tragedy and irony, and it suffers somewhat from an unbridled ambition.

More in this play is tried and true than the authorship. "Grand Hotel" and even "Street Scene" showed in ample panorama how a group of lives may be intertwined for tragedy or melodrama within a single building. Here the focal point is a dinner given by a New York hostess for two titled English visitors, and the authors follow in tremendous detail the lives of eight of the ten guests during the week that culminates in the dinner of the last scene. To accomplish this, they involve their characters in a mesh of crossed relationships which sometimes strain credibility and require a full act to establish. The process is subtle, however, and deftly amusing, and the abundance of material never taxes memory or patience.

The diners are a deliberately representative lot—ill-assorted, intriguing, but scarcely appealing company: the worried host, secretly faced with financial ruin and certain death from heart trouble; his superficial wife, absorbed in her social career; the favorite actress of twenty years ago, fading but glamorous with the splendor of the Delmonico period; the coarse, scheming financier from the West, secretly responsible for his host's disasters; his common wife, with the mind of an ill-tempered child, late hat-check girl at the Hottentot Club, who has snared another of the guests, a fashionable physician, risen from Tenth Avenue; his long-suffering wife, resigned to her husband's wayward ways; and finally, the most remarkable study in the play, Larry Renault, the movie idol past his prime, arrogant, foolhardy, dissipated, who earned eight thousand a week before the talkies came and is now reduced to a character part in a shoddy Broadway show. Thrice-married, he is secretly involved with his host's daughter.

Not content with these ample materials, the authors have made their cross-section complete with pictures of the merely middle class in the hostess's poor relations and of a stratum lower still in the triangular tragedy below stairs. To have wielded such a plethora of characters with clarity and ease is a "stunt" of large dimensions, but there was danger of its getting little beyond that. To expound a plot of such ingenious complication might leave the characters merest sketches in the coils.

The authors have averted peril in several instances by resort to familiar or potentially familiar types—characters whom the reader coöperates in constructing. The stage beauty of another day, the loud Westerner, the hat-check girl thrust into millions, the empty-headed hostess, and the movie star felled by the talkies are immediate types for satire or melodrama, and they have never been done more dexterously in small compass than here. Mr. Kaufman, the unequalled satirist of American types, showers wit in penetrating cynicisms, sometimes bitter but more often merely amused. His dialogue is at its raciest in several of these scenes, especially the raucous bedroom-brawl between the Westerner and his wife.

Irony is the keynote of the play, a clear view of the incongruous in things. Most of the scenes end with blackouts on startling situations. The second act curtain is consummately sardonic, when, as climax to a crescendo of real tragedies, the authors bring mock importance to a relatively trivial one—the English visitors' last-minute refusal to attend the dinner—and the curtain finds the hostess furiously insisting to her household that she alone deserves pity. Most ironic of all is the last scene, in which after all the impending tragedies of the other scenes, the guests assemble to talk pleasant trivialities at dinner. The ending expresses the familiar, but appropriate, inconclusiveness of life.

But the play has other purposes than satire, and its weakness lies here. Satiric pictures of familiar types can be impressed with a few deft strokes on an ample canvas, but the more complex human beings demand greater freedom from a large plot that must go on. The characters that should be nearest our sympathies are somehow lost in the shuffle of revolving stages.

"Dinner at Eight" inevitably acts better than it reads. The long scene of the movie star's suicide, most stirring in the play through Conway Tearle's magnificent performance, is pantomime that stage directions convey only imperfectly. But the pungent dialogue and most of the pictures carry over in the script.

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A Letter from Germany

By HELENE NOSTITZ HINDENBURG

THE fact must constantly be kept in mind that the inclination of the Germans to produce fiction of the English or American type is steadily declining. Especially have they lost interest in the society novel. Society, indeed, does not really attract our authors. Nature, art, politics, science, philosophical problems, the youth movement have far more fascination for them. They do not take society seriously, which is perhaps a mistake, since the social code is a shield against the worries and vicissitudes of daily life. Proust's fourteen volumes are based on this conviction — a conviction which the German would call an illusion.

An instance to the point is "Das Gut im Elsass" (Kiepenhauer Verlag), by Glaser. This is a brief love story developed against the political background of Alsace Lorraine. The author presents the shortcomings of the French post-war attitude impartially. He gives us enchanting descriptions of landscape and people. And he sounds an arresting note when he makes his peasant say: "It is all the same whether a cornfield is in one place or another. Wherever the crop is good, there we are satisfied and at home. There would be no feuds if everyone felt like that."

But when he begins to write of society, as he does in describing the home of Mrs. P., Herr Glaser at once becomes uncertain of himself and uninteresting except for the political reflections he puts into the mouth of his heroine. He is utterly unable to convince us of the veracity of his lovers. The only figure he succeeds in making lifelike is Mr. B., a symbol of Alsace Lorraine, torn asunder between his love for two countries, and suddenly ending his life because he cannot solve the difficult conflict of his soul.

There are two authors, both of them diplomats, who have tried to describe social life under the stress of war and revolution. One is Kühlmann in his "Kettenträger." The other is Herbert von Hindenburg whose new novel, "Der Gesandte" (Dresden: Reissner Verlag), is a portrayal of a disappearing type, the old-fashioned diplomat. It is a tale the emphasis of which is so preponderantly on psychological problems, that its author finds little opportunity for depicting a society the importance of which he does not acknowledge. The book is a study of fear, built about the personality of the hero, a diplomat who, despite his contact with the most luxurious capitals of Europe, knows nothing of the fulness of life. His whole existence is governed by fear,—fear of impending disgrace, of his superiors, of society. It is symbolic that this man, who was perhaps intended by fate for an artist, should seek peace on an island near Stockholm, and there live, looking forward to the long night when at last absolute solitude will be his. His *"chers collègues"* of the diplomatic corps soon discover his hiding place. Every manner of life he tries, every attitude toward life, becomes hopelessly conventional. He falls victim to his distraught nerves. His final reaction to life is once again fear,—the fear of meeting a man, who is a figment of his imagination but the thought of whom drives him to a premature death. At last he is rid of a life he has never been able to control. Thus the book ends on a note of tragedy. Yet, despite the sadness it provokes, it captivates by virtue of a playful style and the old-fashioned grace with which it handles some of the deepest and most tragic problems of human existence.

Another interesting figure in our diplomatic world is the minister and philosopher, Gerhardt von Mutius. His book, "Das Dritte Reich," published many years ago, is purely metaphysical. He is the great advocate of pain, sacrifice, and tragic experience, which, to his mind, give rise to a spiritual wealth which mere happiness fails to elicit. Through pain, he holds, we enter into a kingdom of high promise and unknown joy. Herr von Mutius, whose contention it is that our own age is as remarkable and heroic as any period which has preceded it, is now at work upon a book entitled "Mythical Figures of Our Time." His is a philosophic outlook, and certainly much must be accorded a philosopher who attempts to make clear that an idealistic world lies back of the realities of everyday life.

Wassermann, who is well known to American readers, essays, in his new biography of Stanley, to present this attitude of mind in symbolic fashion in the comparison he makes between the explorer drifting in a small boat on a great river, and gazing out toward the open ocean, and the philosopher intent upon his soul's vision. By both the brutality and pettiness of daily existence are forgotten. We see the explorer, attacked by savage tribes, yet continuing on past cataracts and mighty waterfalls. The dead are numerous about him, but he sits unperturbed, apparently immune to attack, his eyes searching the horizon, undaunted by hardship, until at last the sea gleams in the far distance. He has accomplished his work; new domains have been added to the world. Herr Wassermann's book gives expression to the yearning German soul, so often clouded and rent by a bitter partisanship, and so unsuccessfully conveyed by communist literature because of the personal venom which invalidates its interpretation.

Wassermann's book contrasts sharply with Count Keyserling's "South American Meditations" which uses the actual merely as a springboard to contemplative discussion. As that book has already appeared in America I shall not dwell upon it here except to state that it, too, is born of the desire of our time to give expression to the inexpressible.

The group which clusters about Stephan George, one of our greatest poets, is at present silent. The master himself hardly ever lifts his voice. One of his greatest disciples, Gundolf, is dead. A single book of another, the "Frederic II" of Kantorowitsch, a life of the great medieval emperor which appeared several years ago, still holds place, and has qualities which should assure it continued life. Here again the true German character is bodied forth, in its embracing interest in the strange, the unusual, and the foreign. For Frederic II personifies the German nation. Regarded from this point of view this remarkable book, though not of the moment, is nevertheless of the hour.

"As *fascinating a book of travel as this publishing season is likely to bring forth.*"
—*N. Y. Times*

Charles S. Brooks'

ENGLISH SPRING

This new book by the author of "A Thread of English Road" and "Roundabout to Canterbury" follows the homely and ancient trail through Dorset, Devon and Cornwall, the shore of the Bristol Channel, Somerset, Glastonbury, Wells, Bath and into London. It's a book for those who love England and its springtime, whether they've seen it in books or in life, for Mr. Brooks writes his usual delightful, intimate observations of the countryside and its literary associations and Mrs. Brooks, his companion, draws some seventy odd pen and ink sketches of wayside scenes.

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—*N. Y. Herald Tribune*

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383 MADISON AVENUE NEW YORK

Round about Parnassus

By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

CHRISTMAS CLEARANCE

ALWAYS there are a number of flat thin volumes accumulating on the poetry shelf—I mean as to shape and size. Every so often one looks through them and discards a certain number. But the hope is always there that sequestrated between the covers of some modest volume may appear at least a smouldering of the divine fire. Which, I may say, is something that happens very seldom! That is a conservative statement.

Certain of the less-well-known publishers issue poetry books in quantity. Henry Harrison of 27 East 7th Street promotes poets. The Paebar Publishing Company of New York is even newer. Bruce Humphries of 470 Stuart Street, Boston, also makes poetry a specialty, and Dorrance & Company of Philadelphia bring out quite a few volumes. Beside these there are numerous imprints one has never encountered before, represented by a small book or two. At this merry season I am effecting a clearance of the shelf. Let me examine these books in order with brief comment:

From Henry Harrison:

FLAMINGO. By *Vivian Yeiser Laramore*, Poet Laureate of Florida.

An indefatigable poet recently interviewed at some length in New York newspapers. One who has since 1927 won over three hundred dollars in poetry prizes and who has contributed verse to a variety of periodicals. She has appeared in and introduced anthologies. An adjective chosen by her publisher to describe her work is "clamant." To me her poems are more like neat little packages of versification tied with ribbons. I can't see them as anything else.

FIRST FURROW. By *Boris Todrin*. Introduction by *Elias Lieberman*.

The author is seventeen years old and winner of a poetry scholarship to Columbia. He begins with exercises in rondeaus and triolets. Later on he is beguiled by the jade garden of Chinese poetry. Then he gives us sonnets and, finally, blank verse. His is a natural apprenticeship, but he has not yet begun to create his own language or to make words truly evocative.

WASHINGTON POETS. An anthology of fifty-nine contemporaries in "the northwesternmost state." Foreword by *Mary J. Elmendorf*.

Here is a great deal negligible, very little of definite personality. A long way through the book we come on certain poems by three women, Lucy M. C. Robinson, Blanche Howe Sisley, and Muriel Thurston, that are rather better than the rest. Elsewhere there is a lack of originality and a sentimentality often positively painful.

From The Paebar Publishing Company:

THE GOLDEN MEASURE. The Poems of *Ernestine Sellier*. Cliché on cliché. Dregs of the old.

THE ENDURING FLAME. A Sonnet Sequence. By *Stanton A. Coblentz*.

Better had he spent the time given to these on trying to perfect one sonnet.

MASQUERADE. A First Volume of Poems. By *Kathleen Sutton*.

No, there is hardly anything here.

THE CHOIR PRACTICE. Anthology selected from the column *Choir Practice*, published monthly during the year in the Charleston (S. C.) *Post* and compiled by *Ellen M. Carroll*.

Verse in newspaper columns is not often good. This is pretty bad. The only real item of interest is that in "Poet Cage" Mr. Benjamin Musser seems to have a confused memory of John Hall Wheelock's splendid poem, "The Black Panther."

From Dorrance & Company:

WORN SHOES. By *Patti S. Broadhurst*.

In her free verse, something tumultuous, this poet gives evidence of individuality. She rouses one somewhat from the lassitude that much reading of mediocre verse induces. That is something.

FIRST HARVEST. By *Sabra-Frances Rollins*.

This young poet is a Vassar junior, twenty years old. As prentice work this verse is rather good, though scarcely brilliant.

THE POT-BELLIED GODS. By *Robert D. Abrahams*. Frontispiece by *Clayton Whitehill*.

The nose-thumbing of an annoyed poet, satisfied to have his fun and let literature go to the devil. So he does.

From Bruce Humphries, Inc.:

SONGS OF A SAILOR. By *Herbert Seymour Morrison*.

The author has had thirty years of travel, from vagabond to the U. S. Navy. His verse is pretty bad.

TWENTY-NINE POEMS. By *Carl F. Strauch*.

A mediocre medley

EVEN SO COME. By *Arthur D. Ropes*. This is almost incredible!

There still remain individual volumes from The Yale Series of Younger Poets, Nicholas L. Brown, The Christopher Publishing House, and The Kingsley Press, Inc.

PAUL ENGLE—AND OTHERS

There have been thirty volumes in The Yale Series of Younger Poets before Paul Engle's. Among the names, we find that of John Chipman Farrar, now a well-known publisher; Hervey Allen, now famous both as poet and prose-writer; Harold Vinal, poet and publisher of poetry; Paul Tanaquil, Thomas Hornsby Ferril, Frances Frost, and others who have done good work. The work of Paul Engle, in its own beginnings (*Worn Earth*), is sound. His touch upon his material is not fumbling, often it is precisely delicate, always it is inherently rhythmic. His thought has grave wisdom in it. And he is aware of life—no small praise for a young poet. Read "Greece and The Bloodroot," "Hart Crane," the poems in the section "Men with Dirty Hands." His epithet is usually good—thought-out, not flagrant. He can say a thing straightly and leave it in time. Even his 1931 Class Poem—when so many Class Poems are mediocre—has real dignity. He will do better, possibly much better, but this is a good beginning. Two verses from his "Notes for an Epitaph" must serve to illustrate the merit I find in this unobtrusively fine work:

Let no fire-fathered knife
Tempered at the forge's flames
Carve any empty legend there
As meaningless as names.

Wishing You all a
Merry Christmas —
and hoping,
with utter selfishness,
that you enjoy it in the
entertaining
rewarding
instructive
company of —
Mr. Galsworthy
Mr. Sullivan
Mr. Barrie
Mr. Adams
Mr. Hemingway
and Mr. Will James
also reminding you that
Friday, January 13, 1933
is the publication day
of the NEW
Philo Vance Story
The Kennel
Murder Case
by
S. S. Van Dine
the best detective story in
two years; that is, since Mr.
Van Dine wrote "The Scarab
Murder Case." Jan. 13th, 1933
Scribners

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Cut nothing there, for nothing can
Reveal the thought-belabored brain;
But rather let be scrawled on it
The scrivening of rain.

In *The Kingdom of Smoke: Sketches of my People*, by Stanley Kimmel (Illustrations by Hugo Gellert), Nicholas L. Brown, Inc., we have observations in free verse of the Southern Illinois coal-mines, —of their people, and of the historical past and the strident present in relation to them.

GOING TO WORK AT DAYBREAK

The half-sun on the horizon is a vermilion fan
With a picture of a coal mine upon it.
The scattered huts of the prairie people
Are ships lying at anchor in a great sea.

Mr. Kimmel is succinct, impressionistic, seemingly dispassionate. He deals with the coal country somewhat as Carl Sandburg might deal with it. To my mind, two of his best poems are toward the end of his book, "Advertisement" and "Reverend Spilman." But there are others. And these are authentic etchings. I discern from them what the miners really think and feel and occasionally have time to dream. "My people," says the poet,

are poor people.
Some of them live in tiny huts no larger than a coal barge.
Some of them live in boxcars at the side of the railroad tracks.
There are times when you may see short tin pipes throwing out gusts of smoke, and smell food cooking.
There are times when you may hear the shrill sound of a harmonica and voices shouting a high damn at life.

I wish that Mr. Kimmel might try a narrative poem of some length concerning his people, with interwoven rhythms. His sketches are good so far as they go, but one wants more, and one would like him to develop a manner of statement that would not suggest Sandburg.

A. M. Sullivan's *Elbows of the Wind* (Kingsley Press, 225 Varick Street, New York City), again reflects the industrial chaos of our day, for background. Mr. Sullivan's is an uneven achievement, but he can write as good varied things as "Christmas Up-To-Date," "The Tragedy that Came to Dolan," "Measurement," and "Times Square." Usually he uses metre and rhyme. Later on in the book he evinces a knowledge of the gods of Eire and things Irish. From that part let me quote his "Conquest with Doubt," a poem fundamentally Celtic. It may illustrate his originality of statement which is sometimes notable:

Darker, aye darker than the reticent disc
Of the moon
Is the cavernous throat of the basilisk
Who lives on the desolate dune
Of my soul. He seeks to devour
Me, but I am still agile
And cling to a tremulous tower
More supple than fragile.

Brighter, aye brighter than white wrath of God
Or the pits of Hell
Are the eyes of the monster whenever my rod
Blisters his hide. His horrible yell
Shatters the gloom to a luminous heap
And out from under
His ponderous torso I creep
Holding a fragment of thunder.

Professor John Charles Van Dyke, who died recently, was a prolific writer who produced almost two score volumes on art, literature, and natural history. His "Rembrandt and Tis School," published a few years ago, with its attributions to other artists of pictures up to that time credited to Rembrandt, aroused a wild furor among art critics. Professor Van Dyke was for many years a member of the faculty of Rutgers College.

"Upon his death," says Sir Richard Gregory, "Faraday bequeathed to the Royal Institution two quarto and eight folio volumes, containing more than four thousand closely-written pages, recording the experiments and observations made by him during the forty-two years from 1820 to 1862. These Experimental Notes constitute the Diary which the managers of the Institution have arranged to publish in seven volumes under the editorial supervision of Mr. Thomas Martin, their general secretary. The first two volumes just issued cover the period from 1820 to 1836. The work is to be completed within the next two years."

Points of View

Belated Review

To the Editor of the *Saturday Review:*

Sir: Looking back over my left shoulder the other night, I chanced upon an Omen in the long-forgotten title, "The Literary Spotlight," a book edited by John Farrar and published in 1924. I hasten to recommend it to any critic who seeks to know what has happened here among us in eight short years. It is a book of literary personalities among whom you can lose yourself almost as readily as you can among the names on your pack of last year's Christmas cards. You go off into reminiscences and catch yourself murmuring, "That's so . . . the Joneses . . . I wonder what has become of the Joneses!"

The book is written with a zest which we have since lost. The young man (then twenty-eight) who compiled it is now browsing over on the commercial bank. The supposedly anonymous contributors had a vast sense of the importance of the era they were reporting, and took a devilish delight in legend-building. The whole work is as easy, as hearty, as cocksure as biergarten conversation. But it is a sobering work nevertheless, for it reminds you that in 1924 there *was* a literary spotlight in America, and that it was pretty much in focus upon something that was really happening. The inimitable caricatures by Gropper, with which the book is illustrated, deserve to live. They are done with the sure stroke of a man who knew how to draw, and who knew whom to draw—in 1924. The *Bookman* of 1922 and 1923, in which much of this material appeared, has since go down the drain. But it is a source of delight and of reflection to go back into this book and dwell again for an hour in the liveliest period in all American literature.

What a day it was, across the vast plains of America, when Mencken witticisms were as common among collegians as were Model-T jokes among travelling salesmen! When boys and girls drew in deep breaths of a new kind of air, upon making the acquaintance of "A Few Figs from Thistles"! When Amy Lowell's cigar smoke first drifted across the nostrils! When Stuart Sherman (No, my child, not Lowell Sherman!) was "laying them out" in rows! When the very devil himself got into the minds of Scott Fitzgerald and Floyd Dell! When a "new poetry" was assured! When a "new prose" was up and coming! When a bright, new world was on the way, and old-fogeyism was on the run! What magazines there were then! What literary talk! What "groups" and "circles"! What scandalous books!

Open "The Literary Spotlight" at any page, and you bathe in a kind of atmosphere that makes your nostril quiver. No such air has blown about your head for a long time. Can it be possible that The Era closed only eight years ago? It seems like recollections of a previous existence. Why, the poets were running about to one another's houses, then, and calling each other Robert and Carl and Louis. And the critics were running around in circles, making up mild, harmless lies about the poets. Prose writers were dropping a dark, forbidden fruit from among the branches. There was a real poetry coming up then! There was a real prose coming up then! There was a real criticism coming up then! And every week of the year, there was literary news by the bushel—most of it really news.

Of course the *Bookman* didn't get it all. There was too much. "The Literary Spotlight" of 1924 showed a vast panorama of moving figures. But it missed a few. It showed Sherwood Anderson, but failed to show Dreiser. It does not mention Edith Wharton or Willa Cather or Zona Gale. It missed Eugene O'Neill, Carl Sandburg, and Vachel Lindsay. You could write another "Literary Spotlight" with just the figures omitted. But there would be no advantage: it would be the same kind of book. The sense of movement is all there; and it is this quality of the book that fits it to serve the antiquarian purpose to which I am devoting it.

For it occurs to me that a similar book, compiled in 1932, would be dull reading. Our literary production has grown more decorous, more sober. We have lost a magnificent zest which once we had. (Call in no sociologist to explain this fact!) All of us—editors, critics, authors—are "playing safe." No one is guessing; so no one is making mistakes. With no mistakes, there is no rush toward correction, no thunder of outraged voices, no clash of contrary attitudes. Everyone is doing the right thing, or as nearly so as possible. Hence the contents of next month's books are exactly predictable now, and no one will need to read them at all. Probably no one will. Couldn't somebody, somewhere, let down a bar or two in the interest of reviving so important a thing as movement? An author could do it, by writing with abandon. A critic could do it, by being too smart, and a little bit wrong. An editor could do it, by being irresponsible for a whole week; by expressing his disgust at the caution, the timidity, and the fear shown in a typical batch of copy that comes to his desk.

The public, which has gone off to watch a dog-fight among the nations, would come back as soon as any excitement showed itself. The literary world in America right now is about as lively as a couple of octogenarians playing chess. Every move is perfectly calculated according to a well-known system. A writes a book that everybody knows the public wants. B publishes it. C says about it what everybody knew he would say. And Everybody, looking on, is only mildly amused.

The movement, which is the glorious thing recorded in John Farrar's "The Literary Spotlight," was brought about by a lot of people-you-wouldn't-expect-to-be-writing-books, writing just the Books-you-wouldn't-expect-anybody-to-write, which were, in turn, reviewed by critics who said What-you-wouldn't-expect-them-to-say. And that, my dear Watson, was news. It made talk; it made argument; it made readers by the thousands. It made careers for the authors; it made publishers out of the critics; it made retired business men out of the publishers. For America, it made a spot of glory in a literary history that was dreary at the outset, and that has threatened to go dreary again after the revival.

LAWRENCE H. CONRAD.

Upper Montclair, N. J.

On Authors

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*

Sir: By a happy coincidence I have read your recent, charming dissertation "Under the sign of the hour-glass" almost on top of Oliver Goldsmith's first book, "An Enquiry Into the Present State of Polite Learning."

In chapter ten he refers to the old observation "that authors, like running horses, should be fed but not fattened" and from here he proceeds to discourse upon what appears, even in the middle eighteenth century, to have been an important problem.

I have taken the liberty to tell you of this in order that, in case you have forgotten it, you may find pleasure in re-reading the passage.

In any case it seems to me to be an interesting example of the fact that literary problems and human nature have in common, among other things, the quality of immutability.

HOBART B. LEWIS.

O Splendid Appetite

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*

SIR: Why didn't some book reviewer—or better still, the publisher in paid space —tell us about Cameron Rogers' "O Splendid Appetite!" (if that's the correct title—I haven't my *S. R. L.* by me)? I clipped that leading article on Mangan from the *Saturday Review* years ago and put it in a scrap book from sheer admiration of the magnificently vivid style of a man whose work I'd never met before. It had an urgency, a drive, a fine, gorgeous reality that made it exciting to read as a tale of murder. I never knew till you stuck a mention of it in Trade Winds that it was obtainable in book form. I'm on my way out to get a copy.

R. K. LEAVITT.

New York City.

[*It was described in our Brief Mention column, with price and publisher noted.—The Editor.*]

Years mean little in England. Taking advantage of a "fineless week" at the Cambridge public library, a subscriber has returned a book, "The Story of Scotland," which he took out thirty-eight years ago! The amount of the fine should have been £58.

The Price of Books

To the Editor of the *Saturday Review:*

Sir: Referring to your editorial on The Price of Books, book prices will have to come down but not to $1.75. Fifty cents is nearer the figure. Publishers should get over the habit of basing prices on cost and base them on what people will pay, which is the way prices are figured in all modern businesses. Costs should be forced to meet this figure.

Publishers will have to realize that they are not, for the most part, in competition with Shakespeare and Dante but with Metro-Goldwyn, Mayer, and Paramount. Most people don't want books any more for improving their minds but simply for amusement, and the cost of amusement is not much over fifty cents an evening.

If publishers would forget the habit of basing their estimates on a 2,500 sale and would use a 2,500,000 figure, they might get somewhere. Also if they would stop bringing out new books as fast as possible and try to sell those already on the market, they would not be up against their own products as competition.

Some publisher with money in the bank should do a little experimenting. He should try bringing out a new Hemingway, a new Mary Roberts Rinehart, or a new Morley in a really reasonably priced edition, and he should try selling it, not as literature, but as a good time.

I suppose this has been thought of before, but no one has had the nerve to try it.

J. G. EDMONDS.

New York City.

How to Settle the Debts

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*

SIR: It seems there has been a deal of gossiping about the matter of foreign debts. The main point of the note-writing that U. S. asks and the foreign nations are reluctant to answer, is:—have you any assets? They say not. What about the British Museum, La Bibliothèque Nationale, the Louvre, the Roman and Florentine Art Galleries, the German collections of science and art, *und so weiter?* It is good social-economic theory, is it not, that when a self-made man has accumulated money, he immediately looks about for culture? He has credit in the financial world but little in the social, cultural, aristocratic group. So what does he do? He buys fine pictures for his walls, good books for his library, figurines for his pedestals, statues for his gardens, etc.

U. S. A. is in the position of such a man. She is a great creditor nation, but she lacks the ancient, classical culture. Here is the opportunity of a national lifetime. Let England ship over the British Museum; France, the Louvre, etc. Let all the movable and valuable culture of debtor countries be carried to America. The government, then, could consign the *objets* in small allotments to auction houses all over the states. The consignments could be made over a long period of time, so that the auction values would not flounder in a flooded market. In the meantime, if the government needed funds, it could put up the Mona Lisa or the MS. of Beowulf for collateral.

The final result over a long period of assimilation would be that during the delayed process of selling, the government would have genuine collateral available for credit, which would steadily diminish to make way for the cold cash paid by the purchasers through the auction houses. The culture of Europe and England would be disseminated among the actual people of the United States, with the more important items, such as the Magna Charta, the Venus de Milo, etc., lodged permanently in museums and institutions; and the great international debts would be wiped out.

Of course the debtor countries would never speak to us again; but Rome did the same thing to Greece once upon a time, and they all survived. So *pourquoi non?*

ELEANOR A. B. BECKMAN.

Naperville, Illinois.

To the Rescue

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*

Sir: In connection with some research work, I am very eager to read "Isabel Clarendon" and "Workers of the Dawn," both by George Gissing. I have been unable, as yet, to buy or borrow them in this country, and I am wondering if some of your readers may have them and will let me use them for a week or two. Needless to say, they would have my best care and would be returned promptly.

PAULINE ROSAIRE.

432 Merrell Avenue, Park Ridge, Illinois.

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received.

Art

WOOD-ENGRAVING AND WOOD-CUTS. By CLARE LEIGHTON. Studio Publications. 1932. $2.50.

MAKING AN ETCHING. By LEVON WEST. Studio Publications. 1932. $2.50.

These handbooks offer a novelty in close photographs of hands actually busy with the main technical processes. It is a procedure that saves much verbal description, and the cuts are attractive in themselves. The tools and implements of the two crafts are also photographically reproduced. All this is most business like, and a distinct advance on most earlier manuals.

As an example to the beginner numerous prints in excellent collotype reproductions are offered with brief comment on their technique. Here Miss Leighton's selection and notes are extraordinarily happy and informing. One follows all the stages of wood engraving in one of her own best blocks, and in one of Eric Gill, while the effect of over-inking and under-inking is illustrated in a similar fashion. The book is a model of what William James called agreeable leading.

While Mr. West does not show the same delicate sense of the beginner's needs, his book, too, is well conducted and in its brevity and clarity preferable to most of the earlier manuals.

At the price these compact quartos are an extraordinary value in good printing and superior illustration.

ART AND NATURE APPRECIATION. By GEORGE K. OPDYKE. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1932. $4.

A GRAMMAR OF THE ARTS. By SIR CHARLES H. HOLMES. The same. $3.

If art be still not understood, it is not for lack of interpreters. Two new guides now enter the field,—Sir Charles H. Holmes, veteran painter, museum director, and writer, and Mr. George K. Opdyke, former mining engineer, self-taught art lover who wishes to extend broadly the advantages he has won for himself.

It is probably the conviction that the sergeant is a better preceptor for the awkward squad than the major-general which has led the Carnegie Corporation and the American Institute of Architects to lend Mr. Opdyke their auspices. His book which teaches how to see in nature what the artist sees, and then proceeds to the analysis of design in the various arts, will be helpful to such beginners as have the patience to read it and follow instructions. Mr. Opdyke's text is reinforced by interchapters made up of quotations from earlier *ciceroni*. Here he might have profitably utilized an excellent essay on landscape beauty by the late Professor Shailer. It is surprising that the admirable studies of natural beauty by Ruskin are not more heavily drawn on. The book is clearly and sensibly conducted, but being written without much vivacity or any stylistic distinction would gain from judicious abridgment.

Sir Charles takes nature for granted and proceeds to the discussion of that essential part of art which is fine craftsmanship. First he treats it genetically, then as applied in the several arts. The discussion is carried off with the richness of a vast experience and the crispness of a trained critic. There are a few well-chosen illustrations.

Drama

HENRY ARTHUR JONES AND THE MODERN DRAMA. By RICHARD A. CORDELL. Long & Smith. 1932. $2.50.

Henry Arthur Jones was most important to the English drama as a propagandist for a higher dramatic art and a more intelligent condition in the commercial theatre. Mr. Cordell's book, while it is written rather loosely and its critical ideas are neither numerous nor original, points out clearly the gap between Jones's theories and the melodramatic art of his plays. Jones's ideas were vital and definitely a contribution to thought on the theatre and his efforts to improve English dramatic intelligence were, with the exception of his plays, consistent and arresting. His career thus provokes an important question: whether propaganda of a high order can benefit the state of dramatic literature unless it is bolstered by plays of an equal excellence as art. In other words, can ideas for the theatre, however profound in themselves, affect the course of drama when unaccompanied by an art that puts them to work on the stage as well as on the platform and through literary essays? Seldom does artistic theory work out successfully except through the man who forms the theory, and in Jones's case the importance of his propaganda is weakened considerably through the fact that he never measured as an artist to the full length of his program.

Mr. Cordell's book is not so much a critical study as an index to one. It contains considerable information on the plays and productions but its estimates are on too broad and general a scale. It lacks analysis and concrete evaluation: knowledge of the dramatic art. Most of the plays are judged from the uninformative levels of "good" and "bad." Either a more complete study of the theatre of Jones's time or an ingenious explanation of the main theme (the inability of Jones to produce what he crusaded for) might make an absorbing book.

Miscellaneous

RROU. By MAURICE GENEVOIX. Translated by ALICE GRANT ROSMAN. Illustrated by DIANA THORNE. Minton, Balch. 1932. $2.50.

They do these things better in France—here is a novel of a cat, written without the heaviness of the Germans or the obviousness of the Anglo-Saxons. The story is simplicity itself. Rrou is born, adventures into kittenhood, chooses a home, spends the summer by the Loire, in the autumn sickens with longing for the country, rouses at the call of the migrating birds to stake all on a return, spends five terrible months in the winter woods, comes home to die, is nursed back to life by his mistress, the old servant Clemence, and once strong again, disappears. It is the telling of the story that holds one from page to page. Exact and beautiful, one perceives every motion and mood of the black cat, drawn with a line at once light and unerring. The background is filled with the changes of the seasons, the sun, the winds, the odors and colors of leaves, the presence of birds and small creatures, the intimacy and warmth of houses, and above all the essence of French living and thought. The drama is never accented. It depends on the slightest change of a mood or some far-reaching intimation. Rrou is actual. His battles, loves and dinners are real and ponderable. But the unearthly quality of cats is caught too, and his eyes gleam in globes of witch-fire from the depths of the pink horse-chestnut tree. To me the ending is masterly.

THE PEEP SHOW. By WALTER WILKINSON. Stokes. 1932. $2.

Mr. Wilkinson, in this slender companion volume to his "Puppets in Yorkshire," relates his simple wayside adventures in a pepperly style, with homely philosophizing—this time with the Cotswold hills his stronghold. He says of his trade that "all showmen should make their own puppets—a puppet show should be a work of art dominated by one personality, organized into a harmonious production of form and color by one definite style of thought." Yet he never mislays a saving sense of humor regarding his "unconventional and hopelessly romantic" self, and his Old Encumbrance on Wheels. He collects humanities like coppers as he goes, but never permits his slices of "life" to peter out in the telling because he cuts them short and lets the reader's fancy conclude them for him.

In mild dissatisfaction (for one could not be severe upon so tranquil a work), we might say there is too much about the Peep Show, its mechanism and difficulties, and too little of the musings on the countryside and pen sketches of the people that characterized the Yorkshire wanderings. Nothing is too trivial for the author to record diary-fashion, often to the reader's boredom.

Travel

WALKS AND RIDES IN CENTRAL CONNECTICUT AND MASSACHUSETTS. By *Chester R. Longwell* and *Edward S. Dana*. New Haven.

BREAK YOUR LEASE. By *Helen H. Gay*. Brentanos. $2.50.

THE SOUTH COUNTRY. By *Edward Thomas*. Dutton. $3.75.

The Compleat Collector

Fine Books · First Editions · Fine Typography

"Now cheaply bought for twice their weight in gold."

Conducted by

CARL PURINGTON ROLLINS & JOHN T. WINTERICH

Caveat Lector

MODERN PUBLICITY, 1932. (Commercial Art Annual.) New York: Studio Publications. 1932. $3.50 and $2.50.

MODERN Man is surrounded by Modern Publicity. Up to 1914 we had suffered a good deal from the common variety of advertising, the kind which reached its dizziest heights over the mystic symbols "tcnr"; but when the gentlemen who managed the war for us discovered the possibilities of "publicity" we were exposed to an epidemic of such virulence as had not hitherto been known. What was done by the high-pressure publicity promotion men of the war period is a disgrace to the cause of truth. They did win the war—after a fashion—but they habituated the American mind to over-statement or misstatement as a usual accompaniment of advertising, a genial whimsy of the advertiser's. The reader was expected to take it seriously up to the moment of buying—after that he was expected to laugh with the advertiser. It was all a gambol by the advertiser and a gamble by the buyer.

But as in the case of any poison, the human system quietly sets up its own resistance—a pretty general cynicism towards all advertising. What could one expect? If all the titanic fury of press and pulpit, bar and bureaucracy against supposed German excesses was nonsense (though the accusations were cruel enough) was it likely that anything in the public prints was any more truthful? Probably the gravest damage done by the war was on the intellectual front, and General Publicity led the attack. Later, when the war ended, the same ruthlessness appeared in the advertising columns of the journals. The evolution from the informative advertising of the eighteenth century, set in dignified type, was complete. Every font of type in existence or possible to devise was used—and sometimes most of them in one advertisement. Every conceivable device — extravagant color printing, society leaders, Rockwell Kent's wood blocks, scientific anathema, seductive appeals to ambitions, fear in a dozen forms, temptation in fifty-seven varieties—was employed to forward the cause of publicity. Yet in the end the public learned to read advertising as fiction, and, guided by instinct, reason, and such impartial advice as could be found, to realize that much of the fiction was plain falsehood. It was, therefore, with relief that the intelligent reader saw the great advertising areas of our magazines shrink under the stress of the business depression. Such shrinkage may have been hard on the magazines, but it was good for the readers, and, in the end, it will be good for legitimate commerce.

As judged by the advertisements appearing in the annual volume here under review, there is still a good deal of bunk in modern publicity. Also there is still too much involved and messy picturization, too much concern for the aggressive individuality of the advertisement and too little regard for its relation to the page and the neighbors. But sanity will sometimes insist on being heard—as in the clear and forceful designs by C. Dreher for the Boston Insurance Co., many modern trade-marks, some travel advertisements, etc. In general the examples shown in this book are like Josh Billings's definition of human nature: they average just about so much to the acre all over the world.

Advertisements—comic strips—the movies they are very much alike. Their producers take them seriously, but you and I don't need to. R.

That New Dress

PRINTING-HOUSE Square, London, has been more excited during the month of September than it has since the first printing-machines were surreptitiously introduced in 1814. In press despatches to this country, in leading article and editorial, in special pamphlet, and in synchronous "letters to the Editor," betraying an eye for publicity which even an American might envy, the London *Times*, the dear old Thunderer, has announced a typographic rejuvenation. As our London correspondent tells it: "The *Times* has changed its type! There has been as much talk and explanation and excitement over it as if Buckingham Palace had changed its front steps!"

"The fun's all over at Buckingham Palace,"
Christopher Robin said to Alice:
"Printing-House Square's the place to go,
To see the lead soldiers all in a row.
They've all got new uniforms now on the Times,
For Leader and Personals, Law Courts and Crimes,
The Prince set the first line, the King read the proof,
The first copy went to the British Museum,
The Abbey was lighted from cellar to roof";
And Alice and Christopher went down to see 'em.

But if the furore over the new dress, as evidenced by the *Times* itself, seems a bit amusing, the results are far from insignificant. Newspaper typography has been pretty bad ever since the eighteenth century style was abandoned. In Europe and America alike, newspapers have been set in weak, indifferent type, and have suffered from a mélange of ill assorted, poorly drawn display letter. The influence of book printing, which during the past century has often been excellent, has not been felt in newspaper offices, even the best of them.

The first deliberate attempt at improvement was in the adoption (within the past few years) of the more readable Ionic type (such as this *Review* uses). Ionic is a readable type, but it is not a comely letter. The new *Times* type is both readable and comely. It is, so far as I know, the first attempt to design a newspaper letter which combines those two desiderata. It has been designed in the office of the *Times*, and it has been made in a full range of sizes for all the news columns of the paper, as well as for classified advertisements and the text of small advertisements generally. It is vaguely reminiscent of a legible roman letter from Germany in use some years ago, but it possesses fewer mannerisms. Its chief defect, purely as a matter of design, is in the stubby descenders, but the exigencies of newspaper use perhaps necessitated this concession to a bad practice.

The treatment of the head letter in the *Times* is interesting, if not entirely convincing. The letter forms seem rather too loose in design, but that is a somewhat captious criticism. They are considerably heavier than the text type, and although slightly condensed forms are used in some cases, the customary British practice in headings permits the use generally of good size capitals of normal width. Happily the absurd monstrosities in the way of ultra-pinched head letters, which disfigure almost all American newspapers, are nowhere used in the *Times*. And the advertising columns are decently set in good type—not in the off-scourings of the type specimen book. A pamphlet on "Printing the *Times*," obtainable from the *Times* Office for a shilling, tells the whole story of the new typography.

One may poke fun at the *Times*, both at its solemnity and at its conservative arrangement, but such jesting is a token of affection and envy. In the English-speaking world there is no newspaper to equal it, and if there were an American edition, deliverable at my door every morning, I would rather "take it in" than any newspaper I know. R.

Mrs. B. E. C. Dugdale, a niece of the late Earl of Balfour, is writing his Life. It will probably run to 400,000 words. She has already edited and published as much of the autobiography as he had finished before his death.

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CLASSIFIED

BACK NUMBERS

BACK NUMBERS OF MAGAZINES at Abraham's Bookstore. 141 Fourth Avenue, New York.

BARGAIN OFFERS

UNUSUAL BOOKS, private press and limited editions offered at drastic reductions. Catalogue free on request. Cockatoo Press, 1107 Broadway, New York.

BOOKBINDING

WHAT THE WELL-DRESSED BOOK should wear. A Bennett Binding of Hand-Tooled Imported Leather—Morocco, Levant, or Calf—Modernistic, Period or Conventional Design—According to Date and Content. Bennett Book Studios, Inc., Hand Book-Binders and Wholesale Dealers, 160 East 56th Street, New York City.

FIRST EDITIONS

FIRST EDITIONS AND GOOD BOOKS. Books by and concerning Walt Whitman. Catalogues on request. Alfred E. Goldsmith, 42 Lexington Avenue, New York.

FIRST EDITIONS, FINE PRESS. CATALOGUES. PHILIP DUSCHNESS, 507 Fifth Avenue, New York.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY FIRST EDITIONS. Request list free. Charles K. Stotlemeyer, Hancock, Maryland.

FIRST EDITIONS AT PRE-WAR Prices. Catalogue ready. Associated Library Exchange, 15 West 44th Street, New York City.

RARE BOOKS, PRESENTATION Copies, Limited Editions, Catalogues issued. Associated Library Exchange, 15 West 44th Street, New York City.

CHRISTMAS CATALOGUE READY. New, Limited, fine press and de luxe books at half price and less. Associated Library Exchange, 15 West 44th Street, New York City.

FRENCH BOOKS

VISIT OR WRITE THE FRENCH BOOKMAN, 202 West 96th Street, New York. Catalogues, 5 cents (stamps).

"L'ILLUSTRATION" Christmas number, foremost French weekly, profusely illustrated, nearly 100 colorprints, all suitable for framing, DELUXE EDITION, $2.50. The French Book Company, 556 Madison Avenue, "New York's Largest French Bookshop." Big Catalogue (it's a course in literature, nearly 200 pages) 20c (stamps). Mail orders, information, prompt. "Over 500,000 French Books in stock."

LITERARY SERVICES

MATHILDE WEIL, LITERARY Agent. Books, stories, articles and verse criticized and marketed. Play and scenario department. THE WRITERS' WORKSHOP, INC., 570 Lexington Avenue, New York.

LETITIA PENDLETON — Constructive criticism, editing, polishing. Particulrly interested new authors. EDITORIAL SERVICE, 17 East 96th Street, New York.

YOUR MANUSCRIPT SHOULD BE sold! This office sells plays, novels, short stories, published books or produced plays for motion pictures. International connections, publications planned. Editor, literary advisor. Grace Aird, Inc., 551 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

DETAILED CRITICISM OF ANY manuscript: 40c per thousand words, minimum $1.50. Special rates for books. Marketing: 10% commission after sale. Revising, editing at nominal rates. WRITERS' GUILD OF NEW YORK, 251 Lexington Avenue.

OUT OF PRINT

OUT-OF-PRINT books promptly supplied. National Bibliophile Service, 347 Fifth Avenue, New York.

"SEVEN BOOKHUNTERS," Station H, Box 66, New York City. Experienced specialists in out-of-print Books and Special Subjects. Quotations free. Send want lists.

SCHEDULE OF RATES

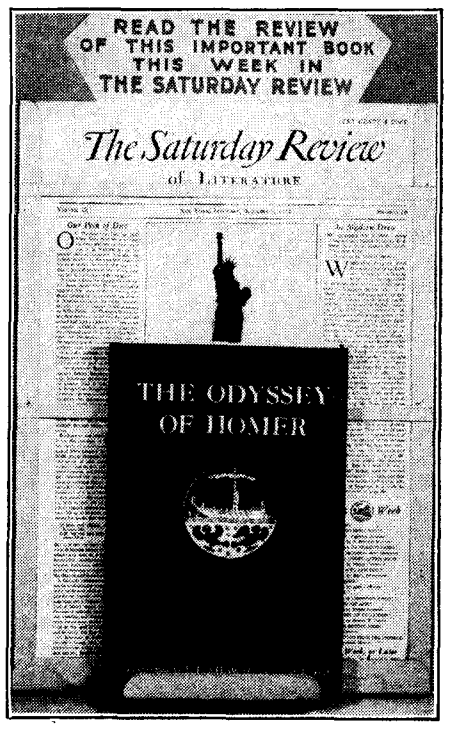
The ADVERTISING RATES FOR THIS classified page are as follows: For twenty or more consecutive insertions of any copy, minimum twelve words, 6 cents a word each insertion; for any less number of insertions 8 cents a word each insertion. Copy may be changed every week. The forms close Friday morning, eight days before publication date. Address Department G.H., The Saturday Review of Literature, 25 West 45th Street, New York City, telephone BRyant 9-0896.

Trade Winds

By P. E. G. QUERCUS

I DOUBT whether any 475 cents now in circulation will give more fascinated excitement to future-minded people—architects, decorators, engineers, display managers, housewives, or business men—than the $4.75 needed for a copy of *Horizons*, by Norman Bel Geddes. In this book of visual experiment a designer of genius, trained in the arts of the theatre, turns his eyes forward to study the form and shape of the coming years. In trains, motor cars, airplanes, and airports, and in the humbler utensils of the home, he sets his imagination to work on the utilities of the next generation. What forms will they take, how can we throw off the weight of mere habit and make them more efficiently beautiful? This book, superbly illustrated, opens a new world of creative energy. It is a book of toys for grown-up people; it suggests the rules for playing the immortal game of Tomorrow. Next to a suit of warm underwear, this book is the most useful Christmas or New Year gift I can think of for anyone with ideas. It should be read early in the morning when the mind is eager; and early in a New Year. I like specially Mr. Bel Geddes's story of Mr. Bennett, president of the Toledo Scale Company. Mr. Bennett was struck by Bel Geddes's device of a penholder which served as stopper for the ink bottle. So he called him up and asked him to design a new factory.

Mr. Louis Greenfield, the energetic Promotion Department of the *Saturday Review*, is justifiably proud of a metal display-stand he has contrived for the use of booksellers. It is strongly made of metal, gayly colored in gold with scarlet



lettering and makes an attractive feature either inside the store or in the show window. It holds in seemly display an upright stack of copies of the *Review* and a copy of any book prominently reviewed in the week's issue.

Mr. Greenfield asked Old Quercus to mention to The Trade that he has had a limited number of these valuable stands constructed, and will supply them to booksellers at $1.00 each, which is less than cost.

The most genial tribute ever paid to a contributor to this magazine comes from E. J. B. of Connecticut. She writes that some years ago, reading one of Don Marquis's ballads about mehitabel (the cat), she laughed so heartily that her daughter was born ahead of schedule.

H. R., a librarian in Detroit, was amused by the old story of Wordsworth borrowing books from Southey and cutting the pages with a buttery knife. But she goes it one better. A book came back to the Detroit Public Library with a strip of breakfast bacon laid between the leaves as a marker.

Curtis Hidden Page, known to many thousands of teachers and students for his famous volumes *British Poets of the 19th Century* and *The Chief American Poets*, admired for his masterly translations of Molière and Ronsard and for his fine study on Japanese Poetry, informs us that he has "gone into business in a modest way as bookseller and publisher, and is now handling all his own books as well as a few others."

Professor Page's interesting little announcement adds that

> He also specializes in old and rare books, first editions, autographs, bookplates, and association copies; and will soon issue the first of a series of catalogues, of an unusual kind, with personal comment on most of the items. These catalogues may perhaps themselves become "Collectors' items." A copy of the first issue will be sent free on request to anyone interested.

His address is Gilmanton, N. H.

It is a privilege to pass on this news of the continued activity of a distinguished scholar and lover of fine things.

The *Official Railway Guide*, which has been going since 1868, is probably the largest monthly publication in the world. Mr. A. J. Burns, its manager, was greatly surprised when a customer ordered two copies, one to give away for Christmas. The recipient was probably an old travelling man who would enjoy retracing his journeys in memory.

Mr. John T. Winterich, in a preface to Philip C. Duschnes's (507 Fifth Ave.) winter catalogue:

> The collecting habit, or urge, or instinct, or impulse, or whatever else it may be, appertains, the psychologists tell us, to the acquisitive something-or-other. Presumably this something-or-other is something to be watched. You watch yours and I'll watch mine.
>
> Booksellers are collectors. They collect the wares they hope to dispose of. They collect also from the consumers to whom they dispose of these wares. This all sounds illusory and transitory and diaphanous and impalpable and probably it is.
>
> But in one sense the bookseller is the most permanent, most abiding, most durable and most steadfast of collectors. He collects his wares into lists, compiles the lists into catalogues, and always preserves at least one copy of every catalogue he compiles.
>
> Booksellers' catalogues, no less than sonnets, are compounded of heart's blood.

Edna Valentine Trapnell (Port Jefferson, L. I.) reports a tombstone from Skaneateles:

Underneath this pile of stones
Lies all that's left of Sally Jones.
Her name was Lord, *it was not* Jones
But Jones *was used to rhyme with stones.*

SOCIAL NOTES

☞ A representative of TRADE WINDS escorted Mr. T. A. Daly, the laureate of Philadelphia, to pay a call on Mr. Don Marquis. Mr. Marquis was found having breakfast at a restaurant on Lexington Avenue. When the waitress asked Mr. Daly what he would have, he explained that he was there only to watch Mr. Marquis. "Isn't there a charge for watching me eat?" asked Mr. Marquis. ☞ Mr. George Seiffert, senior salesman of Doubleday, Doran and Company, escorted Miss Clemence Dane to see the Book Department at Macy's during a busy pre-Christmas morning. It is a remarkable sight. ☞ Mr. Fred Melcher, the indefatigable editor of the *Publishers' Weekly*, was the first speaker on the new portable stage built by the Hampshire Bookshop (Northampton, Mass.) for its occasional shindies. Miss Dodd of the Hampshire Bookshop has had the idea of getting all visitors who speak on that stage to autograph it; it will be varnished and preserved as an heirloom. ☞ Jo Davidson, before returning to France, finished his bust of John Erskine. ☞ The first flutter ever caused by the *Saturday Review* in tabloid journalism was when the wide-awake *Daily Mirror* noticed that in the early copies of a recent issue John Drinkwater's poem "The Plea" was erroneously entitled "The Flea."

This week's art supplement is in honor of Miss Helen Jacobs, the tennis champion, who has delivered to her publisher (the Bobbs-Merrill Company) the manuscript of her book *Modern Tennis*. The portrait of Miss Jacobs was specially drawn for TRADE WINDS by our staff artist W. S. H.

Rapidly ageing Quercus found something delightfully refreshing in a publisher's blurb for a volume of poems (and very good poems) by a quite young woman: "She is choosing the public as her audience early, in order to grow up with it."

For amusement or delight, whether inspired by intellectual curiosity, snobbish modernism, or esthetic eclectism, read "The Gloomy Egoist," a study of moods and themes of melancholy from the times of Gray to those of Keats, by Eleanor M. Sickels. Price, $4.75. Published by Columbia University Press.

BARGAINS IN LITERATURE

Phenomenal bargains in new books—Buy where libraries buy. Casanova's Homecoming, Schnitzler ($2.00), $.75. Preface to Morals, Lippman, $1.00. Well of Loneliness (complete), $1.00. Bridge of San Luis Rey, Wilder, Rockwell Kent illus. 2 autographs ($25.00), $8.50. Lady Chatterly's Lover, $1.00. **BLACKFRIARS PRESS,** 327 Fifth Avenue, New York City. Postage 8c per volume. Enclose 10c for catalogs.

PERSONALS

ADVERTISEMENTS will be accepted in this column for things wanted or unwanted; personal services to let or required; literary or publishing offers not easily classified elsewhere; miscellaneous items appealing to a select and intelligent clientèle; exchange and barter of literary property or literary services; jobs wanted, houses or camps for rent, tutoring, travelling companions, ideas for sale; communications of a decorous nature; expressions of opinion (limited to fifty lines). Rates: 7 cents per word. Address Personal Dept. Saturday Review, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

BINDERS for your Saturday Review numbers. Gold stamped, black buckram, wire fasteners, handy way to file the copies as issued, or the back files. Postpaid $1.50. Mendoza Book Co., 15 Ann St., N. Y. C.

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS Made for Publishing Your Book. Fine format and national sales effort guaranteed. For full particulars, write J. B. Mussey, 248 East 57th Street, New York City.

VERSATILE, healthy college graduate, 21, adventuresome, but appreciative of the finer things, willing to travel anywhere as handy-man-companion. Box 102, c/o *Saturday Review*.

RED FLANNELS. Sorry you were ill. Please be careful. New address Louis Koel, 64 Lincoln Road, Brooklyn. Merry Christmas and love. Sally.

THE AMERICAN Professor of English Literature is a combination of timidity and vanity. He loves to "Yes, Yes" his fellow log-roller who writes about Shakespeare. Even when he must know it is all guesswork. Or else he is plain stupid. Ask him to prove that "Shake-speare" was born in Stratford. Watch him evade. He cannot prove it. Ask him to disprove that Edward De Vere was "Shake-speare." Watch him evade. I have asked the greatest, and they squirm like worms on a hook, but refuse to answer. HAPPY NEW YEAR, you dear old profs. GEORGE FRISBEE.

THIRTY-TOO—I have a reply for you—but no address. Personal Department, *Saturday Review*.

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The PHŒNIX NEST

WE have compiled the following summary of recent efforts to produce brilliant and devastating periodical ilterature.

AMERICANA: Hardly *vox populi*, but sometimes *vox humana*.

AMERICAN SPECTATOR: Our cleverest seated on a hot radiator.

COMMON SENSE: As to typography merely a minor offense.

Are we harsh, or are we harsh? . . .

Erstwhile we spoke of *omnibi*—and drew the following from *Harriette Ashbrook:*

> There have been omnibi of sports, omnibi of mystery, omnibi of humor, but as far as I know there have been no omnibi of adventure. So on January 27 Coward-McCann, Inc., are publishing "The Book of Vagabonds" which will contain three full length books—more than 1000 pages—all for $2.50. The titles are "Vagabonding at Fifty," by *Helen Calista Wilson* and *Elsie R. Mitchell*, "Pearls, Arms and Hashish," by *Henri de Monfried* and *Ida Treat*, and "From Job to Job Around the World," by *Alfred C. B. Fletcher*.

e. e. cummings has finally decided on a title for his 225,000 word novel which Covici, Friede will publish in March. It will be called "Eimi," which, of course, all you Greek scholars know means, "I am." . . .

We are sorry to have annoyed *George H. Danton* of Oberlin College in regard to a discussion of the derivation of the term "yen." He feels that *George Frisbee* of San Francisco confused it with the Mandarin "yin," and calls our attention to the connections of Oberlin College with China. We intended no reflection upon the scholarship of Dr. Danton nor on the eminent institution with which he is connected. And a Merry Christmas to all! . . .

Helen Worden's "The Real New York" (Bobbs-Merrill) is a new sort of guide to our fascinating city which every New Yorker should get in his Christmas Stocking. You can pore over it for hours, and in whatever vicinity you live, you will be sure to find charming haunts of all kinds that you never discovered before for yourself. We only take one exception to Miss Worden's discoveries in our own part of the city. The old Scheffel Hall that was *O. Henry's* "Rheinschlösschen," and once bore that other cognomen, *Allaire's*,—with the old entrance on Seventeenth Street,—is now, it is true entered at 190 Third Avenue, but the sign that greets the eye is *The German-American Athletic Club*. We know, because it is a favorite haunt of ours. The singing and piano-playing downstairs is grand, but so is the dexterous violinist who has in his repertory popular songs from as early as we can remember. . . .

Thorne Smith is reaping a harvest these days. He is not only in Hollywood, probably drawing down fabulous sums, but his books are all going strong. "The Night Life of the Gods" has totalled to date 13,000 copies, "Turnabout," 20,500, and the latest, "The Bishop's Jaegers," has gone into a seventh edition with a total of 18,500. Apparently people have turned to lighter literature in this era of depression. . . .

Ernest Hemingway seemed—we say "seemed," for we know only what we read in the newspapers,—to be under the erroneous impression that they had tacked a happy ending on the screen version of "A Farewell to Arms." Apparently this is not so. But a recent film publicity release stirred him to commendable protest against what he stigmatized as "the romantic and false military and personal career" imputed to him. He has stated to his publishers that he "was in Italy during a small part of the late war only because a man was notoriously less liable to be killed there than in France." He "drove, or attempted to drive, an ambulance and engaged in minor camp following activities and was never involved in heroic actions of any sort." He also adds that "any sane person knows that writers do not knock out middle weight champions; unless the writer's name happens to be Gene Tunney." . . .

Lee Wilson Dodd will from now on edit the "Yale Series of Younger Poets." . . .

The Saturday Review is saddened by the death of *Clarence Andrews*, author and professor of English at Ohio State. Probably the most widely read of his books was "Innocents of Paris." He had taught at Yale, after his graduation in 1906, and at Amherst. . . .

Blue Ribbon Books, Inc., at 448 Fourth Avenue, have certainly produced the most ingenious books for young children that we have seen for years. These are the Pop-Up Books, selling for two dollars, which is certainly a big money's worth. For in every Pop-Up Book the children get not only a well-illustrated story to read but colored pictures that stand up and move. The "Pop-Up" illustrations have been done with extraordinary cleverness by *Harold Lentz. Collodi's* "Pinocchio," the story of the wooden puppet who finally became a real boy, and a volume containing "Jack and the Beanstalk," "Little Red Riding Hood," and "Sleeping Beauty," are the two Pop-Up titles. Picture covers in color and colored end-papers, one a map of Giant Land, complete the attractions of these books which combine the virtues of reading-matter and toys. *Mr. Eugene Reynal*, in charge of Blue Ribbon Books, and the whole organization is to be congratulated upon this children's feature. We can imagine no kind of book which at the age of seven would have given us greater delight. . . .

A slighter kind of children's book not without its ingenuity—and one that might also furnish an evening game for grown-ups—is "One Thousand Animals," by *Toni Meyer*, published at seventy-five cents by *Robert O. Ballou* at 347 Fifth Avenue. We won't tell you the trick of it, but the number of animals you can create in going through the book, and, of course, name for yourself, as they betray a medley of familiar characteristics, is legion. It is easy enogh to waste a good half hour making the permutations and combinations. . . .

We have been privileged to look over Volume No. 41 of "Poésies de *Stephane Mallarme* with thirty original etchings by *Henri-Matisse* in an edition limited to 125 copies, each volume in-quarto raisin, printed with new Garamond Deberny type on the presses of Leon Pichon in Paris. The Marie Harriman Gallery at 61-63 East 57th Street is showing this edition and exhibiting the Matisse etchings. The book is published by *Albert Skira*, Lausanne, Switzerland. It is hardly necesssary to say that the volume is exquisite. Five copies of the edition are priced at twelve hundred dollars apiece—so we do not expect many of our readers to buy one!—twenty-five copies are priced at seven hundred dollars apiece, and ninety-five copies sell for four hundred dollars apiece. The distinguished publications of Albert Skira are well-known to connoisseurs. . . .

Curtis Hidden Page, late President of the Poetry Society of America, has gone into business in a modest way as bookseller and publisher, and is now handling all his own books, issued by several other publishers, autographs, bookplates, and his specialty is association copies. The address is Gilmanton, New Hampshire. Write for his catalogue. Mr. Page will be remembered as translator of *Ronsard* and *Molière*, and his book on Japanese poetry now sells at a premium. . . .

Archibald Henderson, author of "*Bernard Shaw:* Playboy and Prophet" has been awarded the Mayflower Society Cup for the best work published by a North Carolinian during the year. . . .

Masefield, we hear, is coming to America in January; *Yeats* is here now, *Drinkwater* has just left. *Francis Yeats-Brown* has been demonstrating Yoga to his friends after a trans-continental tour, and *Feuchtwanger* is now lecturing in the West. . . .

A new publishing house known as The Furrow Press has been formed by *Israel Soifer* and *Margaret K. Soifer*. For the present the publications of the firm will be limited to plays in pamphlet form suitable for production by young people or by marionettes. The address of the Furrow Press is 115 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, N. Y. . . .

We acknowledge the annual Christmas card of our favorite *Gabriel Wells*, the eminent rare bookman. "Life's entire strategy," he says, "may be summed up in a little word—Now." As we ourself are the greatest procrastinator in the world, we believe him!

THE PHŒNICIAN.

The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the choice of books should be addressed to MRS. BECKER c/o *The Saturday Review*. As for reasons of space ninety percent of the inquiries cannot be answered in print, a stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed for reply.

RIGHT OF WAY, please, for gifts. *E. G., New York, wants advice on the choice of a "handsome present" for one who likes travel books particularly.* My advice is "Hill Towns and Cities of Northern Italy," by Dorothy Noyes, with fifty-six reproductions of etchings, aquatints, and drawings by John Taylor Arms (Macmillan). It is a large quarto; every one of its pictures is as we used to say, "good enough to frame," and its descriptive text has the nostalgic charm lovers of Italy require in books about it. It should also be in all public library collections, whether of travel or fine printing.

F. P., Boston, Mass., wants suggestions on compact books of the omnibus order, for a convalescent. "The Plays and Poems of W. S. Gilbert" (Random House) is a gold mine in 1280 pages, little, fat and endlessly funny. It has the full text of the fourteen operas, with three additional plays and the "Bab Ballads," and a book-length life study by Deems Taylor nothing less than a masterpiece in its way. Also it has all the original Gilbert drawings, pert and brisk. A little red book brought for the holidays may be happily given to a convalescent: "Stardust and Holly," a collection of poems and songs of Christmas, old and new, gathered by Dorothy Middlebrook Shipman (Macmillan). I distrust anyone who could come to the end of it without having had more than once a salutary lump in his throat, the kind that comes from tenderness.

S. C. P., New York, wants a book for a very old lady—it must be read aloud or else in very large type. Nine times out of ten what the very old want to hear read aloud is something about life as it was when they were very young. Cornelius Weygandt's "A Passing America" (Holt) is all that, and in large type besides. I know nothing just like it save parts of his earlier "The Red Hills (University of Pennsylvania); it rounds up things that have slipped away so quietly most Americans over fifty will be shocked to realize that they have indeed slipped away for good. Who sees now the *daphne odora*, once our Christmas plant, or the conservatories that were part of the social equipment of our "carriage people"? It is fascinating to follow him on his successful search for a blossoming daphne; it makes me the more determined some day to search out (1) a madeira vine and (2) a wax-plant; concerning the latter he speaks also. They are almost all gone, the old familiar faces of the gray hen, the Venetian blind, buckwheat, covered bridges, chestnut trees, wagon-sheds, high boots, and supper (in the true sense). It is a lovely book; a lady from Virginia sent me a copy because she had read my anthologies of "an American that has ceased to be" and thought I'd like it, and indeed I do.

S. T. C., St. Louis, Mo., wants a book on the geology of the British Isles, this subject being her special hobby. On a recent visit she could find only second-hand out-of-print books, still serviceable, the rocks being still older, but is there something recent to add? I found it in a place one would not guess from the title: "The Villages of England" (Scribner), a lovely book by A. K. Wickham. It discusses—with an exquisite photograph for each—129 villages from every section of the country. As these are characterized by the local building material, the geological formations of the five regions considered are of great importance. These are described with care, and a large geological map is appended.

H. G., Brooklyn, N.Y., wants a book for a boy taking up postage stamps in a serious way. If you give him "Stamp Collecting," by the famous expert Stanley Phillips (Dodd, Mead), he can use it as long as he goes on being a collector. And this, take it from E. Alexander Powell, may be a good thing for him in other ways. For this indefatigable globe-trotter, according to his recent autobiography "Yonder Lies Adventure" (Macmillan), took early to reading books on geography, history, and European politics because he "was not satisfied with merely filling the empty spaces—I wanted to know why, along in the sixties, Parma and Modena and Tuscany and the Romagna suddenly ceased to issue stamps—" and so on. Also you can give the boy "Geography and Stamps," by Kent B. Stiles (Whittlesey House), and he will find out the sort of thing for which young Powell was in search. Or there is a little manual stimulating to beginners especially and good for anyone, Thorp's "How to Build a Stamp Collection" (Day). If you are interested in getting better stamps for the money, there is W. A. Dwiggin's piquant discussion of the subject in "Towards a Reform of the Paper Currency" (Limited Editions Club), whose title hastens to add, "particularly in point of its design." This is not a collector's manual; it is more likely to become a collector's item.

H. J. H., Oakland, Cal., has searched all available books for the rules of the form of solitaire known as Senior Wrangler, and comes to this column as a last resource. It is said to have originated at Oxford and to be mathematical and complicated. I have gone through "Games of Solitaire" and "Two Pack Games of Solitaire," both by George A. Bonaventure (Duffield), and here set down their titles as gift suggestions for anyone given to this pursuit of happiness—but the one that seems unrepresented is Senior Wrangler. Mr. Bonaventure describes Royal Widows and Exiled Kings and ninety-eight others for one pack, and seventy-five from Blind Patience to the Zodiac for two. Will someone given to patience please send directions for the required exercise?

M. C. R., New York, needs an etiquette book for a young man of twenty, oversensitive about the right way of answering invitations, correct social form, and so on. There is, of course, the famous manual of Emily Post, "Etiquette" (Funk & Wagnalls), and there is also a work called "Manners: American Etiquette," by Helen Hathaway (Dutton), excellent for putting the student at his ease. It places the principles underlying the social amenities before the beginner in practical applications, and the style is ingratiating and convincing.

R. C. P., Rhode Island, asks for a particularly pleasant gardening book for an enthusiast. My Philadelphia garden authority says, without hesitation, Beverley Nichols's "Down the Garden Path" (Doubleday, Doran). What's more, she told me it was good as a rest cure, whether you were a gardener or not—and *funny!* And for those who asked me some time ago for books about sweet-smelling flowers, there is a beautiful new one, "The Fragrant Path," by Louise Beebe Wilder (Macmillan), which includes a list of sweet-scented plants all ready for the gardener.

J. L. (no address) *asks if a dictionary of crook terms and phrases has been published fairly recently.* Yes, it was the subject of an editorial in the *Times* when it appeared in England last April: "American Tramp and Underworld Slang," by Godfrey Irwin, "himself a hobo of twenty years' standing." It was published by E. Partridge, 900 copies at ten-and-six; "words and phrases used by hoboes, tramps, migratory workers, etc., with tramp songs." The editorial said "From the gayest and drollest of flashes to the most dreadful and sinister of glooms, the wit of a shrewd and inventive people animates its language with a nervous energy like its own."

T. R. H., Connecticut, wants a comprehensive volume of Mother Goose, strong enough to stand wear. The best collection I have seen so far is "The Land of Nursery Rhyme" (Dutton); it is lately published and the most complete, the pictures for the 400 rhymes are excellent, and the print large and clear; there is a man of Nursery Rhyme Land; the editors are Ernest Rhys and Alice Daglish. It will meet all the literary demands of a robust baby.

"As a master of the art of high thinking and plain living," says Professor A. Wolf, writing in the London *Observer*, "Spinoza has but few rivals in the whole history of mankind. His philosophy is at once so comprehensive and profound that even those who do not agree with it still regard it as one of the very greatest intellectual achievements of the human race. If the main business of a philosopher is, as Plato thought, to gain a synoptic view of the world, to see it whole, then no philosopher as fulfilled his task so well as Spinoza. Add his lofty character to his deep thought, and it will be seen why no philosopher since the days of Plato has won such admiration."

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